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USE THE FORCE— CRACK A BOOK

FROM THE SILVER SCREEN TO THE PRINTED PAGE

Star Wars wasn't the first space fantasy with astounding effects, but it was the first to make it all look as if it could be real. From the rusty vehicles on Tatooine to the slimy trash compactor on the Death Star, the entire galaxy is based in visual realism. So many of the settings look like real places, and so many of the characters seem like real people, that you don't question the aliens, blasters, lightsabers, and starships when they arrive. That's because they're happening in a world you already believe in, so when you witness something magical, it must also be real. Seeing is believing, after all.

So how can Star Wars fiction succeed in printed form, without the benefit of these amazing visuals? There's no question that the fiction does succeed, as legions of fans have proven by putting their favorite novels on bestseller lists time and again. Why do they keep coming back to a medium that can't do any of the things that movies do best? They can't actually hear the energy pulse of Slave 1's lasers from a printed page. They can't really see Obi-Wan Kenobi and Jango Fett fighting on the rain-slicked landing platform on Kamino.

At least, that's what people who don't read must think.

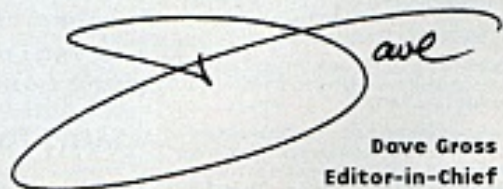
Readers already know that a well-written book can do all of these things and more. Through the power inherent in all good writing, books can make an imagined place even more realistic than a seen location. Like the Force, reading is a talent that touches everyone but which only those trained in its mysteries can fully employ and appreciate. Readers can do far more than see and hear the places and events of the Star Wars galaxy. They can penetrate a character's thoughts, know his feelings, anticipate his choices, sense his pain and triumph.

Come to think of it, readers are a lot like Jedi.

In fact, as Stephen King suggests in *On Writing*, Jedi-like telepathy exists today and has existed for millennia. When you transfer your ideas to paper in the form of words and someone else receives them silently through reading, you've just projected your thoughts... well from a certain point of view, that is.

Since you're reading these words, you obviously don't need any more persuading, but maybe you have a friend who hasn't cracked a book since the last time one was assigned for class. If that friend is also fan of the saga, do him or her a favor and recommend one of your favorite Star Wars novels. If your friend is daunted by the prospect of reading a few hundred pages, point out the short stories in our humble pages. If that doesn't work, try one of your mind tricks. You must be good at them by now.

We wager that you'll successfully set your friend on the path to becoming a reader, and it won't diminish the thrill of watching a great movie one iota. Instead, it will open up vast new stretches of the Star Wars galaxy to those who have only watched the movies. Once they've had a taste of the power of this newfound talent, your friends will know the truth: Reading is believing.



Dave Gross
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REBEL RUMBLINGS



66

email us with the subject line "Crossword" to tell us whether you do the puzzle and whether you always, sometimes, or never defeat it.

THE GOOD DOCTOR

My apologies for a somewhat belated thanks, but I had to write to compliment Dr. David West Reynolds' article in Issue #62 on lightsaber combat ("Fight Saber"). I read the *Insider* from cover to cover in any case, and Reynolds' articles have been fascinating since his first expeditions to Tunisia, but this piece deserves

Praise and adulation are great, questions we can't answer are okay (but of course we won't answer them), and the photos and postcards are best of all, but would it kill you to write us a little poetry now and then? We're not talking free-verse memorials to Chewbacca this time. We've been together long enough that we think we deserve something special, maybe something that rhymes AT-AT. How about a little Jedi terza rima? Or, maybe an English sonnet comparing the young and old Obi-Wans? Heck, we'd swoon for a good sestina or a villanelle on the Clone Wars.

For the merry month of May, we'll once more lift our ban on poetry. That's for one issue only, mind you, so get it out of your system soon. Show you care by sending your Star Wars poems to us care of "Rebel Rumblings" at one of the addresses below. We'll print the best ones for all to memorize.

I DON'T THINK THAT WORD MEANS WHAT HE THINKS IT MEANS

Geez, a *Star Wars* fan for twenty-five years, and this is my first letter to *Insider* or the fan club. Of course all my thanks and appreciation for the fantastic magazine! I love it all, from the "Prequel Update" to "Scouting the Galaxy," but I, for one, think that special kudos are owed to Mike Selinker for his crosswords. I've been an avid cruciverbalist for fifteen years, and I love his hybrid of traditional crossword jargon and *Star Wars* trivia. Plus, they're quite a challenge: Mike always stumps me. I hope a lot of other subscribers are enjoying his puzzles as much as I am. Keep up the good work, Mike, and keep 'em coming!

ERIC JACOBSEN
Walla Walla, WA

It's hard for us to judge how tough Mike's crosswords are, because he gives us the key with the puzzle, and we always cheat. It's good to hear he's stumping some serious crossword aficionados. Quick poll:

WANNA RUMBLE?

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"NOW, NOW, SETTLE DOWN."

special merit. With a name like "Fight Saber," I didn't immediately realize that I was holding an indispensable addendum to his work begun in the *Attack of the Clones Visual Dictionary*. This article was so insightful that it will enhance all my future viewings of my favorite form of fencing.

Kudos, Doc, and thanks.

CAMPBELL EVANS
Orlando, FL

Fans of "Fight Saber" should be sure to keep their subscriptions current for the coming year, as we've got a lot more Jedi combat goodness in the planning stages. Just be careful not to put an eye out. Or an arm off.

FX KUDOS

I'm a longtime reader of the *Insider*, and though it has changed hands a number of times, I'm always glad to see that the quality of the features is consistent and in fact gets better and better.

Lately, I've been especially impressed with Rob Coleman's articles about the digital effects in the

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 90

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PREQUEL

Rick McCallum on Fox Studios in Sydney, action sequences,

Rick McCallum, Producer of *Star Wars: Episode II Attack of the Clones*, brings us up to date on Episode III.

photo by Holina Krukowski



It takes a good three to four weeks to build up the infrastructure, because each film is different.

While the rest of us were unwrapping our action figures under trees adorned with Death Stars and *Millennium Falcons*, Producer Rick McCallum was landing in Sydney, Australia, to begin work on *Star Wars: Episode III*. This sacrifice of personal time is all part of the job to McCallum. "Forget about kids' birthdays and holidays," he says. "That's not our chosen path."

When *Insider* called McCallum in January on a Thursday evening, he answered on Friday afternoon from the other side of the International Date Line, making what seemed like a five-hour time difference actually a mind-bending nineteen-hour gap worthy of a botched hyperspace jump. As always, one of our first questions was the one we see in dozens of letters and emails every week: What's the status of the Episode III script? Has George Lucas finished the final installment of the *Star Wars* saga?

"He's writing," says McCallum. "He's very close to giving us an outline, which is really what we need to get moving."

While having a script in hand would make his job easier, McCallum finds solace in the fact that he wasn't the only one who had to give up his Christmas festivities. "I know he worked all throughout his holiday," he chuckles, "so I was happy for him."

Why Australia?

One reason for shooting Episode III in Australia is economics, but another is that it provides a working environment that the *Star Wars* filmmakers find especially hospitable.

The large stages at Fox Studios Australia provide a striking alternative to other studios. The differences begin with the geography. "It's not laid out like a traditional studio," explains McCallum. "It used to be an old fair ground. It's got a really great atmosphere. The people who run the studio are terrific. It's very open. It's got parkland. There's a cricket stadium right next to it. There are wonderful shops and theaters adjacent to it. It's a really nice, easy, wonderful place to make a movie."

Star Wars productions have a history of roaming beyond the United States, but nowhere else has been as good a home to the films as Sydney—not even England, where McCallum lived for almost twenty years. "I love England, and we've been working in England since—well, George since 1976, and me since 1980—and I love it, and I love the English crews. I especially love working with English crews in the



George Lucas and company plan to return to Fox Studios Australia to film the final chapter in the *Star Wars* saga.

UPDATE 66

and starting work on Episode III

by Dave Gross

rest of Europe. But it's much more difficult. You've got to drive an hour, an hour and fifteen minutes, each way to a studio in England. It's very, very expensive now in terms of hotels, apartments, dinner, and transportation. It's not as easy. Australia is without a question the easiest and most cost-effective place to shoot in the English language anywhere in the world."

While he had been at work for the past few weeks, McCallum had really been laying pipe for the work that was to begin in earnest later in January. "We're just starting now," he says. "It takes a good three to four weeks to build up the infrastructure, because each film is different."

"We use a lot of plastering, because we have what are called compound curves in a lot of our sets, which isn't a tradition that's been in Australia for a long time because mostly they make contemporary movies. You know, they haven't made a lot of science-fiction or fantasy movies. There are a couple of disciplines—like rigging and plastering—that we've brought in. So all those workshops need two or three weeks to set up, recruit the people, and train them to get to the place that they need to be."

While the production infrastructure takes shape, the creative team continues to work at a frantic pace. "Gavin [Bocquet, the Production Designer] is going to be flying from London to San Francisco today," says McCallum. "He's got a whole bunch of models that we went through just before Christmas that he's going to show George. Hopefully George will approve those, and then we'll have the first two or three small sets that we can start building by the end of next week."

Action

While it will be months before most of the cast arrive in Australia, McCallum remains in touch with the principal actors, who have also been busy. "Ewan [McGregor] is shooting a Tim Burton picture in Georgia," he reports. "Natalie [Portman] just finished *Cold Mountain*, which is being shot in Romania."

Sound Bites

Rick McCallum can wax effusive when talking about films, but sometimes his replies are short and sweet:

What did you think of *The Two Towers*?

"Awesome. It's a magnificent, incredible, wonderful, outrageous achievement."

How do you like working with English actors?

"There's no BS. There's just the work."

Will we see new trooper designs?

"Yes. That's all I can answer."

How about Vader's armor?

"Too early to tell."

Any hints about the new worlds we'll see?

"Many," he laughs. "Many."

Hayden Christensen is also working on another movie, but McCallum says, "I know he's working out like mad. He's beefing up." The man who plays Anakin Skywalker is only one of the actors who can expect a rigorous training period before the stunt work in Episode III. If *Attack of the Clones* was any indication, we can expect even more frenetic Jedi action in the next film. Just as with advances in digital effects, recent blockbusters continue to up the ante on intense fight scenes. When

asked how they'll rise to the challenge, McCallum says, "That's a tough one, you know. It's not that we can't. We could suddenly go into a whole different realm—like *The Matrix* or something else—but it doesn't have a lot to do with the basic reality that was set out in the original *Star Wars*."

He says the action in the *Star Wars* movies is unique for a reason. "I think it's because Nick Gillard uses such a combination of disciplines that are trying to fit within the limited physical context that was set up in the original *Star Wars*. That's always been one of the hardest things to get over, because the Force is about something more spiritual. It's not about being able to flip and do double twists and kicks and fly around in slow motion. It's more about when you hit with your lightsaber, you're putting all the force and energy of your own being into something. It's training for that moment. It's an internal thing more than a physical thing."

Tricks like bullet-time photography are available to the *Star Wars* team, but so far they've chosen to remain true to the style they have already established. "It was something we looked at very early on, and we thought, 'Yeah, but how do you incorporate that into the [Star Wars] world?' It worked beautifully for *Matrix*. It just doesn't make enough sense for *Star Wars*."

Much more of the *Star Wars* crew was scheduled to arrive in Sydney in February. With story outline in hand, they should be busier than Geonosians constructing a droid factory, but amidst all the activity, Rick McCallum promises us another insider's report on the making of Episode III. ☺

FROM THE WORLD

STAR NEWS 66

FROM THE WORLD OF LUCASFILM

by Benjamin Harper

» Shaping the Future



ILM Snags Australian Animation Prize

Industrial Light & Magic was presented with the award for Best Visual Effects in a Feature Film for *Star Wars: Episode II Attack of the Clones* at the annual Australian Effects and Animation Festival held at the Sydney Convention Center on December 3, 2002. The awards recognize the very best in visual effects and animation worldwide. Among the other winners: Sony Pictures Imageworks won Best Feature Film: Animation for *Stuart Little 2*, and Passion Pictures won Best Music Video for Gorillaz—"19-2000." ☺

Lucas Honored for Technical Innovations

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures awarded George Lucas its 2002 Special Award for Visionary Cinematic Achievement at a special ceremony at Tavern on the Green in New York City on January 14, 2003. According to NBR, the honor went to Lucas because he "has changed the perception of what it means to have a theatrical experience with his push to greatly improve the quality of both sound and visuals on the worlds' movie screens." The award was also due to his achievements with the THX theatrical sound system, his special and visual effects innovations with Industrial Light & Magic, and his entrance into the world of digital filmmaking.

The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures, founded in 1909, has no commercial ties to the film industry. It supports excellence and free expression in film, endows scholarships for film students, and underwrites film programs. ☺

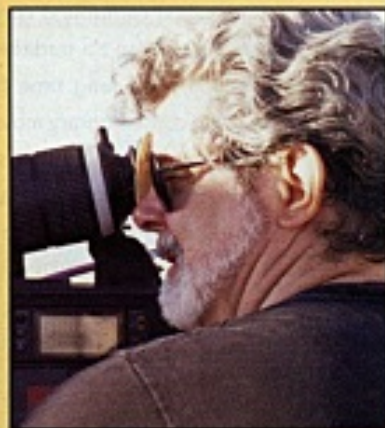
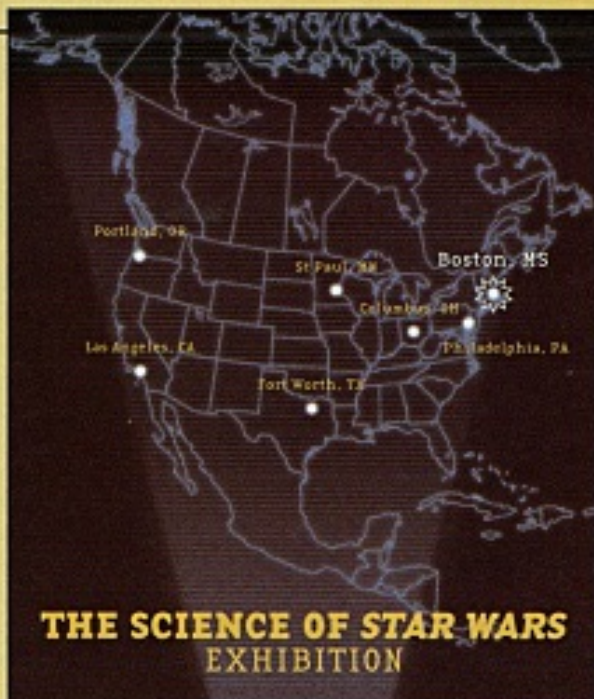


Photo by Lisa Tomasetti



And You Thought Lightsabers Were Fake

Picture a world in which droids do all your work for you while you lounge by the pool. Or, if you're out of blue milk, you can jump into your starship and get some from Tatooine in no time thanks to a little gadget called a hyperdrive. The Museum of Science, Boston and Lucasfilm are developing an exhibition that will bridge the gap between fantasy science and reality science, at least a little, in The Science of Star Wars Exhibition.



The exhibition, which is still in its early planning stages, will premiere in October 2003, after all six *Star Wars* films have been released. It will use the films as a gateway to understanding the important role of technology in our future. The Museum of Science is working with The Science Museum Exhibit Collaborative, which consists of seven museums around the country, and Lucasfilm to create a touring exhibition that will travel and amaze for at least three years.

"So many children and their parents have images in their minds of R2-D2, C-3PO, lightsabers, landspeeders, and other fantastic technologies in the *Star Wars* universe," says Larry Bell, the Vice President of Exhibits at the Museum of Science, Boston. "This is a great opportunity to create family learning experiences around what we know today and how that will lead to the technologies of the future. We are really grateful that Lucasfilm will be helping us address important technology education goals on a national level."

Star Wars artwork, models, film clips, and documentary footage will be coupled with science exhibits, discussions, interactive engineering, and computer technologies to stress the importance of technology in our future. Educational programs are being developed to accompany the exhibit as well.

The exhibit is scheduled to begin in Boston and then travel to Columbus OH, Portland OR, Los Angeles CA, St. Paul MN, Philadelphia PA, and Fort Worth TX. ☺

STAR WARS WEEKENDS

May 16 through June 15, 2003

The Mouse Strikes Back

The power of the Force and the magic of Disney combine once again for *Star Wars* Weekends, scheduled for five consecutive weekends (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) beginning May 16 and running through June 15, 2003 at the Disney-MGM Studios near Orlando, Florida.

A galaxy of *Star Wars* fun will take place each weekend at Walt Disney World with special parades, trivia games, meet-and-greet sessions with *Star Wars* legends and characters, and special activities to cap off each day. The fun takes place throughout the theme park, with the *Star Tours* thrill ride serving as the centerpiece of the celebration.

Admission to *Star Wars* Weekends is included in regular admission to the Disney-MGM Studios. Fans can receive the latest updates online at www.starwars.com. For information, tickets, or hotel reservations, fans can call (407) W-DISNEY or a travel agent. ☺



It's Not Just About Butter and Eggs Anymore!

Petaluma, California, one-time Poultry Capital of the World, is famous for its "Butter and Egg Days" Parade and its appearances in such films as *Peggy Sue Got Married* and *American Graffiti*. It's a charming family haven ripe with apple trees and antique shops. But this town with a population of a little more than 56,000 people is sorely lacking one thing—a movie theater. One would think a town popular for its period-piece movie-shoot friendliness would sport a movie theater or two so people could see their own city in action, but the only area theater Petaluma had—an eight-screen affair on the outskirts of town—closed in 2001.

Unable to drive and not wanting to perpetually hassle parents every time they want to see a film, seven teenage girls, known as the "Superb Seven," are trying

STAR SIGHTINGS

66

by Benjamin Harper

» "Last night, Darth Vader came down from the planet Vulcan and told me if I didn't take Lorraine out, that he'd melt my brain."



HAYDEN CHRISTENSEN (Anakin Skywalker) is going Jurassic. According to zap2it.com, young Skywalker might be working as

producer on a screen version of *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter*. Friend Adam Beach, who's fresh from a role in *Skinwalkers*, an *American Mystery! Special* on PBS, is the brains behind the project based on the comic book and video game property. "There's a new 'Turok' when he's a college student," says Beach. "His uncle has died, and he learns about the responsibilities of a Turok and jumps into it when his family is threatened. A Turok is a warrior who protects Earth from other dimensions. It's a place called the Lost World, and in that Lost World, they're trying to defeat the one enemy who wants to consume all of the worlds. Turok is the warrior on Earth who is fighting these people." Beach, who has also starred in the World War II drama *Windtalkers*, is Native American and hopes to expand the presence of Native Americans on the big and small screen, starting with *Turok*.

In the meantime, **EWAN MCGREGOR** (Obi-Wan Kenobi) and the late **SIR ALEC GUINNESS** (Obi-Wan Kenobi) were both mentioned in a recent list of Top 100 Oscar Snubs. McGregor ranked at #59 for his wonderful performance in *Moulin Rouge!* while Guinness came in at #61 for *Kind Hearts and Coronets*. The two Kenobis are not the only *Star Wars* alumni



who made the list: **SAMUEL L. JACKSON** (Mace Windu) came in at #5 for his role in Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever*. These actors were joined on the dissed-list by none other than James Stewart, who came in at #1 for *Vertigo*, Ingrid Bergman at #4 for *Casablanca*, and Dennis Hopper at #10 for his role as Frank Booth in *Blue Velvet*, to name a few.

Busy as always, McGregor has signed on to play a circus freak in the Jodie Foster-directed *Flora Plum*. According to *The Hollywood Reporter*, the film, which will also star Meryl Streep and Claire Danes, is a love story set in the Depression era and revolves around McGregor's circus-freak character. The freak takes pity on a homeless girl (Danes) and takes her in. As he falls in love with the girl, she launches a career in the circus. *Flora Plum* originally starred Russell Crowe as the circus-freak, but he backed out due to a shoulder injury. The film is also the reason that Foster declined to reprise her role as Clarice Starling in the sequel to *Silence of the Lambs*, *Hannibal*.



Filming will begin late this year or early 2004.

The ever-expanding oeuvre of McGregor does not stop there. He recently starred in a drama for the BBC entitled *Solid Geometry*. This project was directed by none other than McGregor's uncle, **DENIS LAWSON** (Wedge Antilles). According to the *British Radio Times*, the drama is based on a short story by Ian McEwan in which a newlywed quits his job to edit his great-grandfather's diaries that were left unfinished when the writer vanished. As he becomes increasingly obsessed with the diaries, his marriage becomes strained, and he comes to the brink of a strange discovery.

And McGregor might be coming to Broadway, but you'll never know until he shows up. *The Play What I Wrote*, a theatrical hit at Wyndham's Theatre in London, features surprise guest appearances by celebrities who play themselves auditioning for a part in the play. The famous people are unrecognized by their compatriots and are harassed for their poor acting abilities. Other stars who have graced the stage in this hit show are Ralph Fiennes, Jude Law, and Minnie Driver. The British success is due on Broadway March 30, and *Time* magazine reports that Ewan McGregor and Ralph Fiennes will reprise their performances stateside.

A final note on the judicious Jedi—According to *Scotland Today*, McGregor continued to lend



to raise funds to open a theater right in their home town. They've hired a PR firm and gone so far as to interview accountants, investors, and engineers. They also wrote a letter to George Lucas asking for advice.

The girls met with Lucasfilm executives to present their plan of action. All at Lucasfilm were impressed, including Lucasfilm President Gordon Radley. "These ladies don't need a lot of help," Radley told the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "The young women have approached this matter extremely professionally and in a very sophisticated manner." Added Jeanne Cole,

a Lucasfilm spokesperson, "We meet with promotional partners and distribution partners who are sometimes nowhere near as prepared as these girls were." With Lucasfilm's help, the Superb Seven staged a rally in Petaluma, which drew 400 people to a free showing of *American Graffiti*.

Everyone is impressed with the Seven's drive and professionalism. "These girls and their friends know how to shake and move—they're awesome," said sixth-grade teacher Judy Sovel, who taught all seven of the girls at McNear Elementary School. "It's crazy that our kids can't go to the



The Superb Seven have become model citizens in their search to be normal kids.

movies on a weekend without leaving town."

In the meantime, the Superb Seven, who all attend junior high school, are still working hard to turn their theater business dream into a reality, and they are learning a lot about life at the same time. "It's like a classroom outside of school," said thirteen-year-old Elizabeth Comstock. She and the other members of the Superb Seven, including Nicole Bisson, Ashley Dittmer, Liza Hall, Sarah Marcla, Madison Webb, and Taylor Norman, will keep at it until they're sitting in front of flickering celluloid right in their hometown. ☺

Baffled Bond Gets Bumped at Box-office

James Bond, the former film franchise champion at the box office, has been dethroned by the *Star Wars* saga, according to Box Office Mojo. In fact, until this past summer, James Bond beat out *Star Wars*, pulling in a grand total of \$3.3 billion in box office receipts for all films in the franchise. With the advent of *Attack of the Clones*, however, *Star Wars* has surpassed Bond with a whopping \$3.4 billion in box office receipts for five films.

—George McFly (Crispin Glover) in *Back to the Future*



his celebrity status to a beleaguered proposal to build a children's hospice on Loch Lomondside. The project, which McGregor has championed from its onset, came under attack recently when planning officials at the National Park Authority recommended that the project be rejected. McGregor stated, "It's devastating news. People on the whole are optimistic about it, and I cannot accept that it will not go ahead. This hospice is desperately needed." Although McGregor continued to campaign for the Hospice, the decision rested with the National Park Authority, which was to announce its intentions after visiting the proposed site.

McGregor's *Moulin Rouge!* co-star Nicole Kidman will learn from the Jedi Master **FRANK OZ** (Yoda). According to a report from *Sci-Fi Wire*, Kidman has signed up to star in an Oz-driven remake of the classic, *The Stepford Wives*. This time around, the *Wives* get the comedic treatment, as opposed to the dramatic 1975 version. "It's going to be a comedy," said



Kidman. "And I've wanted to do a comedy. I'm in the middle of *Cold Mountain* [co-starring **NATALIE PORTMAN** (Padmé Amidala)], which is sort of an epic, tragic love story. I just went, 'I've got to do a comedy. I need to have some lightness.'" The



story revolves around Joanna (Kidman), a wife and mother, who moves with her family from Manhattan to Stepford, Connecticut, and discovers that the wives in the town are all curiously devoted to their husbands' whims. Oz, who has also directed films such as *The Dark Crystal* and *Little Shop of Horrors*, directed from a screenplay by Paul Rudnick, which was based on Ira Levin's novel. Production began on the "black comedy," as Kidman calls it, in March. The film will have a late 2003 or early 2004 release date.

KEIRA KNIGHTLEY (Sabé) starred recently in *Doctor Zhivago*, a miniseries for Britain's ITV1. In it, she played Lara Guishar. Also starring in the three-part series were Sam Neill (*Jurassic Park*), *The Hunt for Red October*) and Hans Matheson (*The Mists of Avalon*) as Yuri Zhivago, who recently starred with

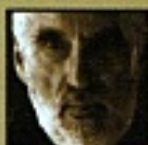


Star Wars alumna **PERNILLA AUGUST** (Shmi Skywalker) in *I Am Dina*. Keira has been getting great press due to her roles in *The Hole* and *Bend It Like Beckham*—*Heat* magazine has described her as "one of the sexiest actresses of the moment." Knightley can also be seen with fellow Episode I star **LIAM NEESON** (Qui-Gon Jinn) in *Love Actually*.



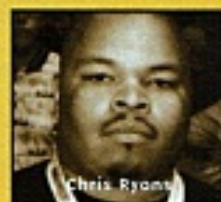
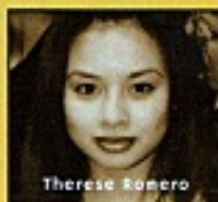
Bounty Hunters reunited! On-screen father-and-son team **TEMUERA MORRISON** (Jango Fett) and **DANIEL LOGAN** (Boba Fett) are together again in *The Legend of Johnny Lingo*. The film is adapted from a short story by Patricia McGeer and is, according to a press release from LDS Films, "a captivatingly romantic tale set amongst the Polynesian cultures of the South Pacific. At the same time, the story's theme about love and self-image resonate with universal appeal." The film, which releases sometime in 2003, features a Polynesian cast.

From the dark side—**CHRISTOPHER LEE** (Count Dooku) recently received the "World Actor Lifetime Achievement Award." The awards took place for the very first time on November 2, 2002, in Vienna, Austria. Other World Award winners included Jeremy Irons, who received the World Actor Award, and Michael Jackson, who took the World Artist Award. 🙄



No other film franchise comes close to these figures. "Every studio is looking for the next franchise," said Robert Bucksbaum, president of ReelSource, Inc., a company that tracks box office numbers. "They don't just want to make one film. The second go-round is so much bigger, because you can bank on it doing at least two-thirds of the original. They definitely get a return on the investment."

What are the other top franchises? There's *Jurassic Park* coming in at #3, *Batman* at #4, *Indiana Jones* at #5, and *The Mummy* at #6. 🙄



Fans Busted!

No, these fans aren't in trouble. They are the lucky winners of Gentle Giant Studios busts of themselves dressed as Jedi Knights. At *Star Wars* Celebration II, held in Indianapolis IN in May 2002, Gentle Giant invited hundreds of fans to step under the laser scanners at the Dark Horse Comics booth to have their images captured for the "Become a Jedi" contest. Three lucky winners, Chris Nordeen, Therese Romero, and Chris Ryans, have now received their prizes: hand-painted, six-inch tall resin busts of themselves.

"We had people line up each day, and we scanned hundreds of fans. We randomly picked one person a day to be the winner and get a bust made of themselves," said Dev Gilmore, Vice President of Product Development for Gentle Giant Studios. "After we announced the winners, they sent in some additional photo reference of themselves so we could accurately paint the busts." 🙄

BEHIND-THES-CENES INFORMATION
STAR WARS UNIVERSE INFORMATION

KEY

The field of archaeology is all about learning to read the messages contained in human-made objects, finding out what do they say about their creators? The same approach works in the realm of Star Wars, whether we explore the implications of various details within the Star Wars universe or probe the technical magic behind the scenes.

GEONOS

STALGASIN WAR CHAMBER

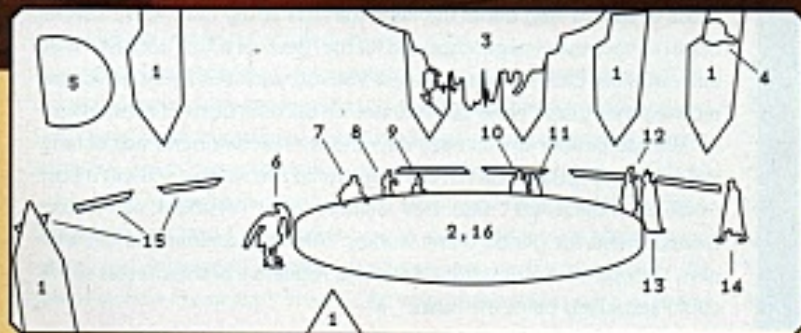
Geonosian hives have had war rooms since before their recorded history—special cells in which military leaders would meet privately with drones returning with intelligence about enemies. With the advance of technology, the war cell became a larger war chamber to hold information technology. Today the major hives all have their own war chambers, but all of them pale in comparison with the spectacular facility in the Stalgasin Hive. Massive sensor banks feed torrents of information to processors and giant displays, giving Poggle the Lesser—and his Separatist collaborators—superb command of information on everything from individual Geonosian citizens to military movements. "Knowledge is Power," runs the motto of the evil spy-ossassin network Sic, which advised the Geonosians on the construction of their intelligence and sensor network operations room. The secret, fantastically well-equipped Stalgasin war chamber would be the envy of generals from all but the most powerful and advanced planets in the Republic... if anyone knew anything about it. Such a facility represents a commitment to war that has been uncharacteristic of the Republic, and indeed contrary to its most basic ideals, but it is perfectly in keeping with the savage Geonosian enthusiasm for violence.

GEONOSIAN ALPHABET

Philp Metschan wanted his Geonosian tactical display readouts to have an appropriate look for their culture, so he devised a distinctive Geonosian alphabet. "I looked closely at the Geonosians and tried to imagine what kind of letters they would have created with their three-fingered hands," he says. Metschan's Geonosian alphabet thus consists of crude, blade-like letterforms rather than fine and elaborate characters that might be more characteristic of species with high dexterity.

EYE OF THE HIVE

Surrounding the Geonosian war chamber in the Stalgasin Hive are huge tactical display panels built into the walls. These screens are organic Geonosian technology, demonstrating the high technical capability of this culture. The panels allow Geonosian strategists to simultaneously monitor a range of areas at various viewing sizes. The largest-scale display shows the entire planet of Geonosis, with Republic fleet ships in space nearby. Other screens focus closer on the surface of Geonosis, all the way down to the heart of the battlefield. The information displayed on any of these panels can be fed directly into the main table monitor for improved three-dimensional analysis.



1. Geonosian-built tactical display panel screens
2. Imlok ARENA-7580 tactical monitor table
3. Holographic system
4. Geonosis
5. Death Star plans
6. Poggle the Lesser

7. Wet Tombor
8. San Hill
9. Shu Mai
10. Senator Tikkes
11. Senator Tikkes' aide
12. Lott Dod
13. Nute Gunray
14. Count Dooku

15. Control panels created by ILM concept artist Aaron McBride
16. Projection light beams and scan-line "refresh" effect added by ILM SDR artists

BY DAVID WEST REYNOLDS

GEONOSIAN WAR CHAMBER

EXTRAPOLATING A BATTLE

The holographic display for the ARENA table monitor clearly shows the layout of the various craft involved in the climactic battle scene of *Attack of the Clones*, but until this shot the layout did not really exist! The battle had been created shot-by-shot at ILM, with elements appearing here or there for the benefit of composition rather than to represent an exact, evolving tactical situation in a "real" battle—and these battle shots were constantly changing in the editing phase of post-production. Philip Metschan had to extrapolate a tactical layout from the battle shots that would correspond as closely as possible with the specific elements seen in the shots and also the cumulative impression of the tactical layout the shots create. This is exactly the same kind of work that *Star Wars* book authors must often do—creating a convincing integration from a disparate set of elements.



ECHOES IN GLASS

The tactical displays mounted into the walls are based on the classic glass-wall tactical maps used in 20th-century naval vessels. Similar glass-wall displays first appeared in *Star Wars* in the Massassi Rebel Base on Yavin, reappearing prominently in Echo Base on Hoth. *Attack of the Clones* echoes all those fore-runners, both real and fantasy, and it does so with strong originality. For the Geonosian War Room panels, Philip Metschan wanted the displays to have a distinctively Geonosian look. "The idea is that they were made with organic technology," Metschan explains.



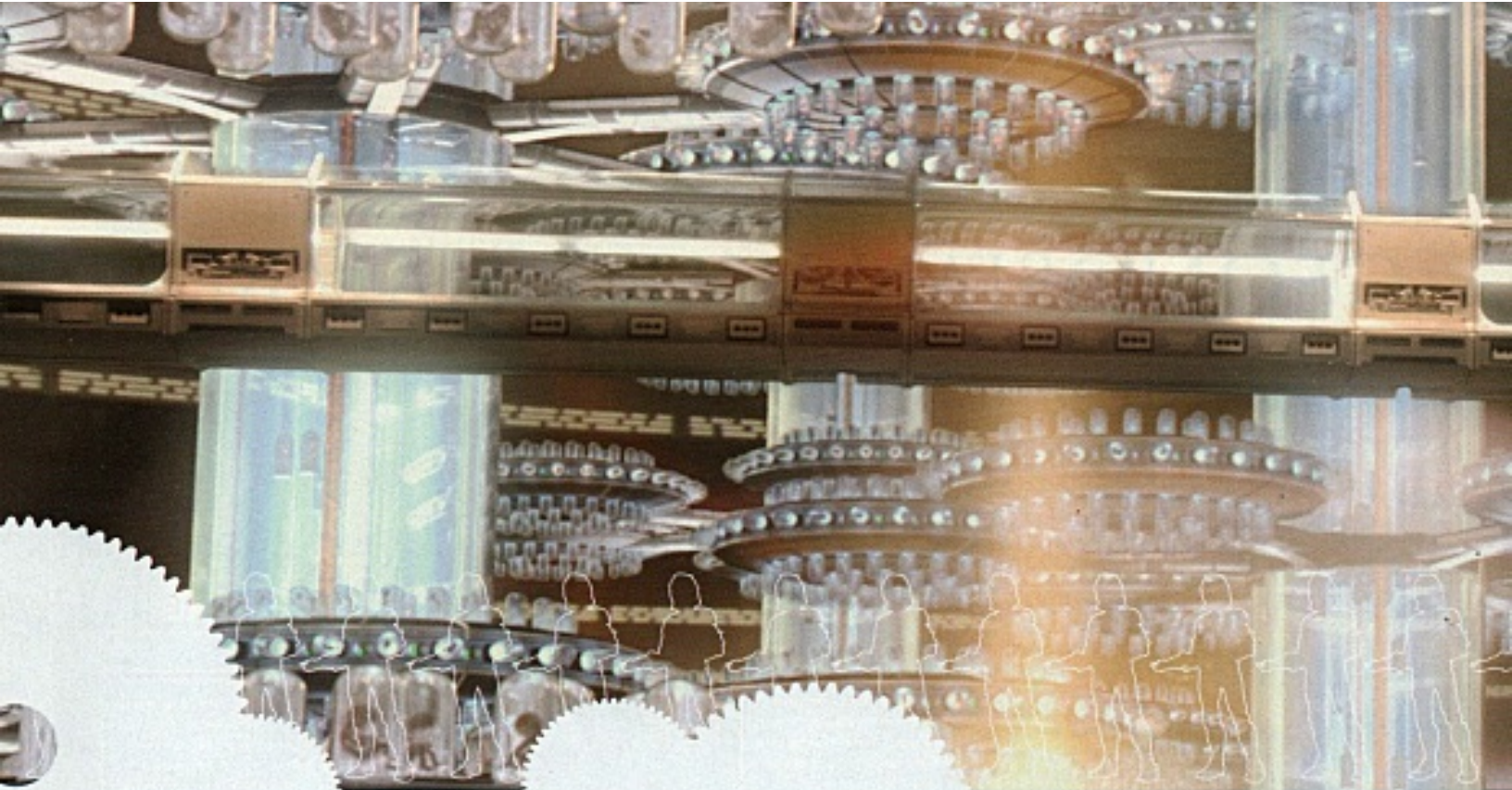
Displays and holograms in the War Room were created by visual effects conceptual artist Philip Metschan, who was responsible for 95% of the displays appearing in *Attack of the Clones*.

Animatics artist Brian Pohl prepared ARENA monitor ship models for this shot.

ELECTRONIC ARENA

The Neimoidians were unimpressed with the flat-screen tactical displays of the Geonosians. To protect their investments in the droid factories, they equipped the war chamber of Geonosis' Stalgasin Hive with the finest (and most expensive) tactical monitor technology in the galaxy: an Inlok ARENA-7500 tactical monitor. The ARENA setup consists of a large holographic display table with an overhead holoprojector. The ARENA provides a completely three-dimensional view, a critical aspect for full tactical analysis, especially when spacecraft are involved. With sufficient sensory input, at highest resolution the monitor table can display finely detailed images of battle craft and even individual ground soldiers. Incomplete sensor readouts on battle craft are augmented with "patches" from blueprints in memory or partial sensor reads from other similar craft, allowing the computer to display higher apparent detail than is actually available under battle conditions. The result gives strategists an extremely clear view of real-time battle activity. The ARENA-7500's ability to quickly change scale, resolution, or viewpoint and to accurately manage the display of thousands of separate items at once makes it a powerful tool for a military tactician—but only if the tactician is expert enough to take full advantage of it.





WAR FACT

I N S I D E K A M I N O &





ORIES

G E O N O S I S



BY DANIEL WALLACE



In

Attack of the Clones, the battle lines of an intergalactic conflict have been drawn, and the galaxy is split into two opposing camps: the Galactic Republic and the Confederacy of Independent Systems. The Republic prefers living soldiers, the Separatists mechanical ones, but both like their armies mass-produced. Naturally, each side possesses a factory to produce their soldiers from the relative security of a remote planet.

The factory worlds are new settings for *Attack of the Clones*, contrasting sharply with the returning planets of Tatooine, Naboo, and Coruscant. George Lucas and the Episode II designers use Kamino and Geonosis to showcase new planetary environments (a *Star Wars* tradition) from which the audience can glean a few timely points about the nature of factories in general. The two planets couldn't be more different visually, but under the surface their souls are identical.

Kamino

Kamino seems like heaven, at least from a design sense. Atmospheric elements and visual cues combine to create an otherworldly experience bordering on the celestial. Soft light permeates every corner of Tipoca City, illuminating harmonious architecture and showing off the city's immaculate cleanliness. The Kaminoans, seemingly creatures of pure intellect, have soothing voices and patient spirits. They glide through their lighted corridors like graceful seraphim.

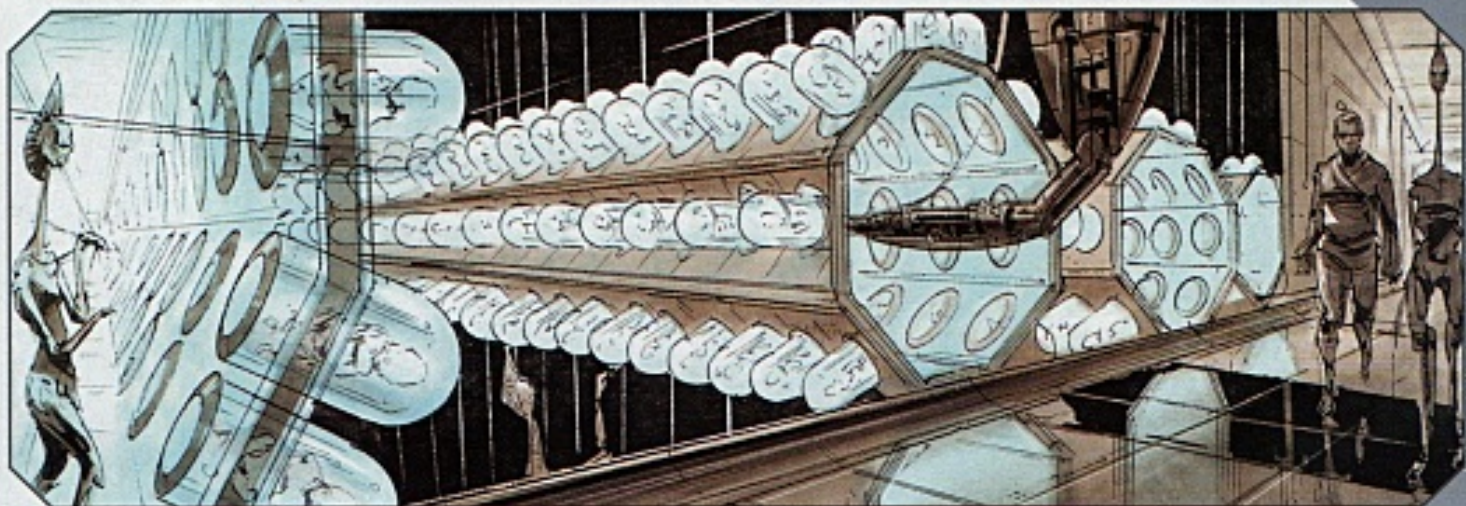
Of course, the Kaminoans are no angels. They have no problem getting their hands dirty—figuratively speaking, for dirt is a foreign concept in Tipoca City—and their actions as producers of war materiel are even more morally questionable than those of the Geonosians. The ultra high-tech facilities required for the cloning process make Kamino a stand-in for the contemporary “factories” of Earth—the sterile, glass-enclosed laboratories where white-suited researchers combat bio-hazards and probe the human genome.

In an interview with *Star Wars Insider*, Episode II concept design supervisors Erik Tiemens and Ryan Church detailed the creative process that helped shape the brave new worlds seen on screen. “The use of white, almost iridescent passages in the beginning is not so much a metaphor for heaven, but [rather] the sense of control, power, and the ultimate loss of individuality,” explained Tiemens. “Shrouded with stormy moodiness outside, Kamino is a complete contrast to Geonosis’ sulfurous hues. With all the planets in *Star Wars*, finding enormous contrast with



The sterile environments of Tipoca City echo modern “clean rooms” and genetic engineering.





the visual experience is a constant goal of the director. In this case, the water planet is as far away as you can get conceptually [from] the interior of the Geonosian foundries."

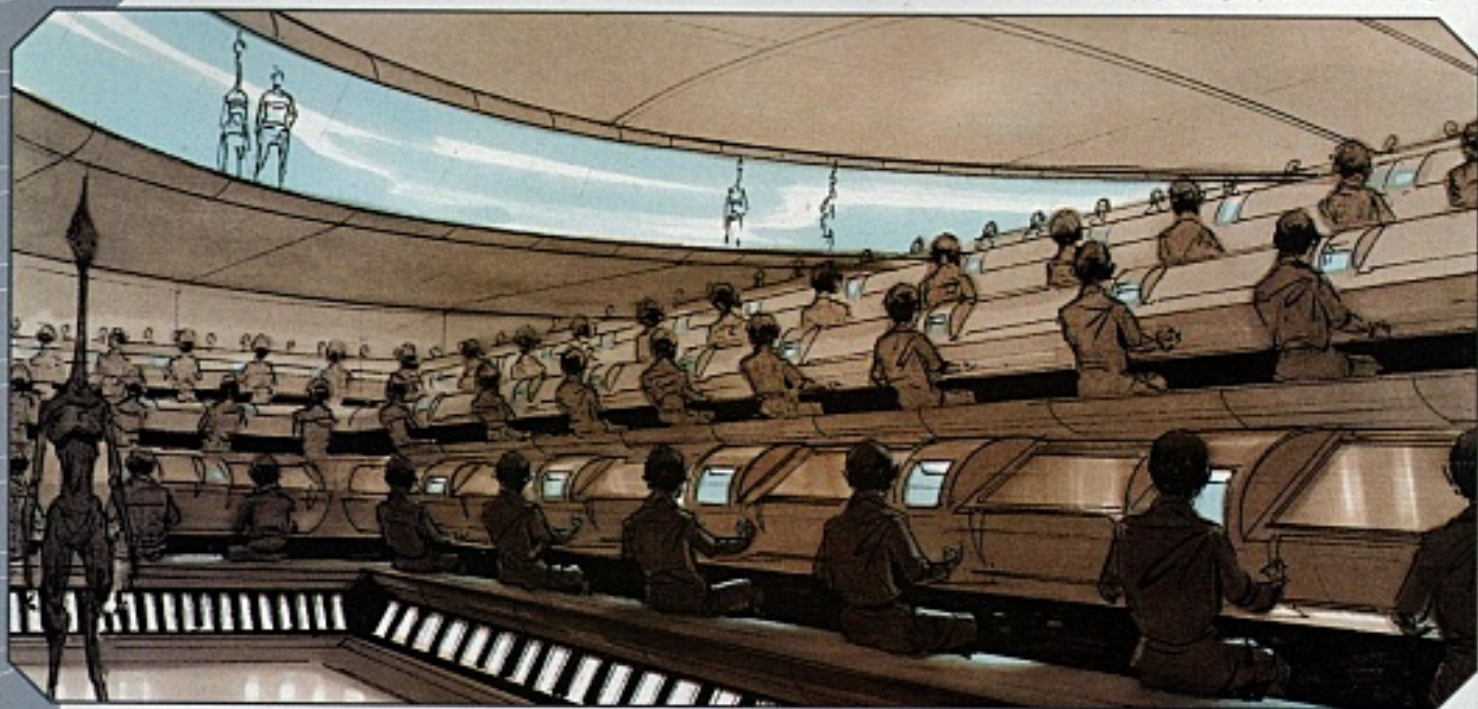
Ryan Church reveals that some of the inspiration for the Kamino environment goes back a quarter-century to classic stormtrooper design. "George asked for the 'clean room' look, stark black and white, just like the clone troopers' suits."

Attack of the Clones reveals that the Kaminoans have been in the genetic-manipulation game for some time—Dexter Jettster calls them "damned good" cloners—and other sources explain that this emphasis on science is a shared cultural trait. The planet Kamino once had flat continents rising from the choppy surf, but a worldwide rise in temperature many centuries ago melted the glacial ice sheets and plunged the planet underwater in a cataclysm the Kaminoans called the Great Flood. The term calls to mind the story of Noah's Ark, and the parallel doesn't end there. Rather than preserve species two by two aboard a giant boat, the Kaminoans built a network of stilt-cities where they perfected the art of cloning to sustain a number of species, including themselves. It's possible that the entire population of Kaminoan aiwhas—the majestic "flying whales" used by Kaminoans as both underwater and airborne mounts—are the spawn of cloned aiwha specimens from Naboo.



Inspired by images of offshore oil rigs, the stilt-cities of the Kaminoans protect their inhabitants from a flooded world.



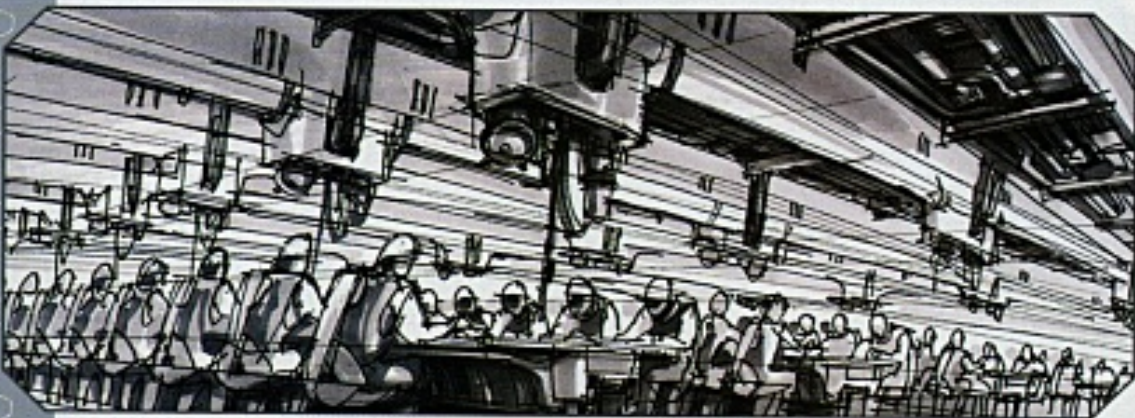


One thing Kamino has in abundance (besides water) is secrecy. The planet sits in Wild Space beyond the Outer Rim, cut off from major hyperspace routes by the tangle of the Rishi Maze. Furthermore, a nefarious agent purged the system from the Jedi archives around the time that Darth Sidious and Darth Tyrannus conspired to order a massive clone army on behalf of the Republic. Prior to that point, most of the work done by the Kaminoans had been for fringe clients in outlying systems like Subterrel, where Dexter Jettster once encountered a work force of cloned miners (and learned to identify the unique markings of a Kaminoan saberdart). To outfit the clone army with ships and vehicles, the Kaminoans enlisted the help of Rothana Heavy Engineering, a subsidiary of Core Worlds-based Kuat Drive Yards. The Rothana system is one of the few destinations reachable inside the Rishi Maze, and its engineers have long been secret partners for lucrative Kaminoan cloning projects.

In *Attack of the Clones*, Obi-Wan lands in the capital of Tipoca City, its architectural profile dominated by saucer-shaped, water-shedding domes and needle-like lightning rods. In long shots, the city is a physical

model while the churning sea around it is entirely computer generated. The stilts on which Tipoca City stands are embedded into the shallow continental shelf below, and their design was influenced by Earth's off-shore petroleum drilling platforms. "I've always liked the striking image of oil derricks in the North Atlantic," says concept design supervisor Doug Chiang in *The Art of Episode II*. During production, Kamino was known variously as "the water planet" and "the storm planet."

The Kaminoans are happy to receive a representative from the Jedi. Taun We, administrative aide to Lama Su and project coordinator of the clone army, greets Obi-Wan upon his arrival. In his spacious office Prime Minister Lama Su assures his Jedi visitor that the clones are on schedule, and Lama Su's position as head of the ruling council of colony governors allows him to speak for the entire planet of Kamino. At one point in script development, it was suggested that the furniture in Lama Su's office look as if it were made of "pure light."



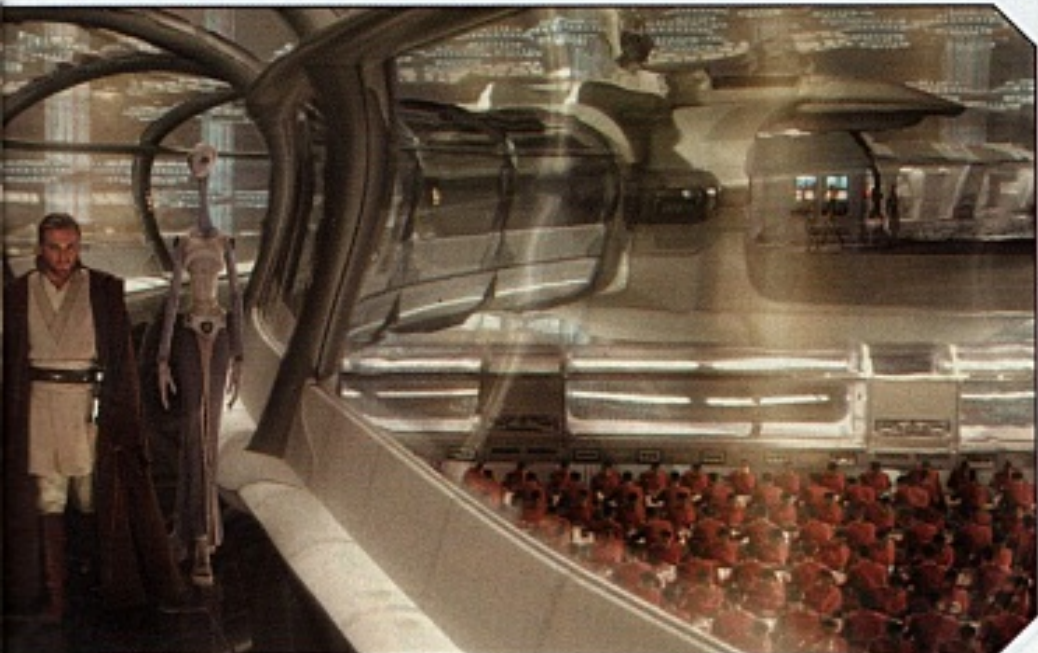
Ranks and files are a common sight inside the clone facility, and the entire place is clean and orderly.





The corridors Obi-Wan walks through during his tour of the facilities are spotless white, calling to mind the totalitarian sterility of Lucas' first feature, *THX-1138*. Says Erik Tiemens, "The long silent hallways of the clone factory, perforated with transparent walkways, almost echo a clinical quality of a satellite clean room or a research lab. The vast scale of the birthing tubes and their blue liquid take on an antiseptic mood that is militant in scale." All of Tipoca City is hermetically sealed, protecting the Kaminoans from the hostile elements and their genetic products from external contagion. The learning stations provided to the growing clones are efficient and cheerless, reinforcing the impression that the clones lack individuality. Regarding the clone classroom, concept artist Edwin Natividad comments in *The Art of Episode II* that the facility has the aesthetic of "injection-molded plastic."

Obi-Wan's stay on Kamino concludes with a struggle against Jango Fett on a rain-soaked landing platform. The platform and Jango's Slave I were realized as partial sets. To create monsoon conditions on command, special effects supervisor Dave Young says his crew pumped in seven and a half tons of water per minute, drenching an area covering nearly a third of an acre. The fight eventually spills over the side of the platform, with both combatants dangling above a deadly drop. This situation neatly illustrates an unspoken George Lucas design principle. "Like Doug [Chiang] told me," remarks designer Marc Gabbana, "there are no handrails in the *Star Wars* universe."



▼ concept painting by Marc Gabbano

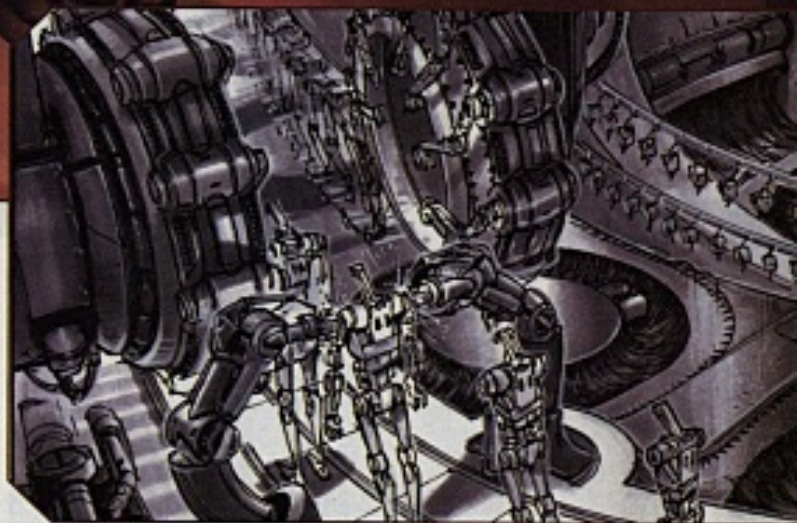
Geonosis

Geonosis is hell—at least visually and metaphorically. Red light suffuses a landscape of cracked rock and eerie stone mounds that resemble melted bones. Within these structures, furnaces roar, gears squeal, and hidden vents belch forth smoke to deaden the gloomy sky. The denizens of this realm are devilish insects who attack in hordes and delight in cruelty and pain. As Erik Tiemens tells *Insider*, “There was conscious effort to push the metaphor of hell and the underworld on Geonosis through the use of hues saturated with burning reds and choking warm grays.”

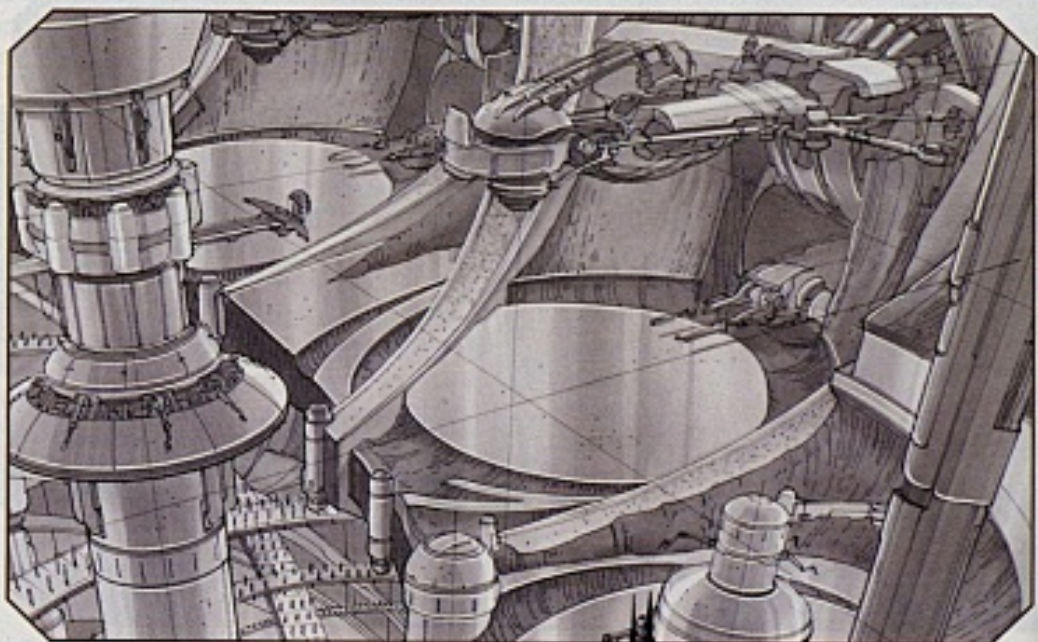
Broad strokes of the color palette infuse the whole movie, according to Ryan Church. “George wanted the first half of the movie to look ‘blue’ and the second half to look ‘red,’” he reveals. “Coruscant (at night) and Kamino were the blue planets. Tatooine was neutral warm, and Geonosis was always going to be red.”

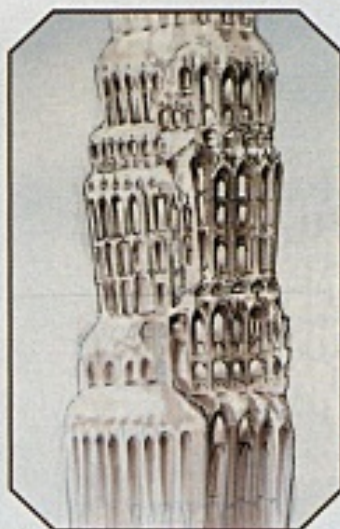
Clearly, the Geonosians are more in touch with their passionate emotions than the Kaminoans. Whether this trait is a bad thing is unclear. Though the Geonosians are painted as bad guys, their mass-produced armies are composed of machines, and unlike the dispassionate, business-like Kaminoans, the Geonosians at least have a clear appreciation of how their products will be employed. Such is the moral ambiguity of Episode II, in which the proud Republic creeps ever closer to becoming the evil Empire.

The infernal droid foundries of Geonosis stand in stark contrast to the purified labs of Kamino, and they seem to exemplify a completely different type of factory—the noisy

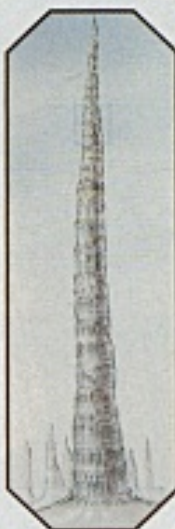


With its fire and sparks, the Geonosian droid factory seems far more chaotic than its Kaminoan counterpart.





▼ concept sketches by Robert E. Barnes ▲



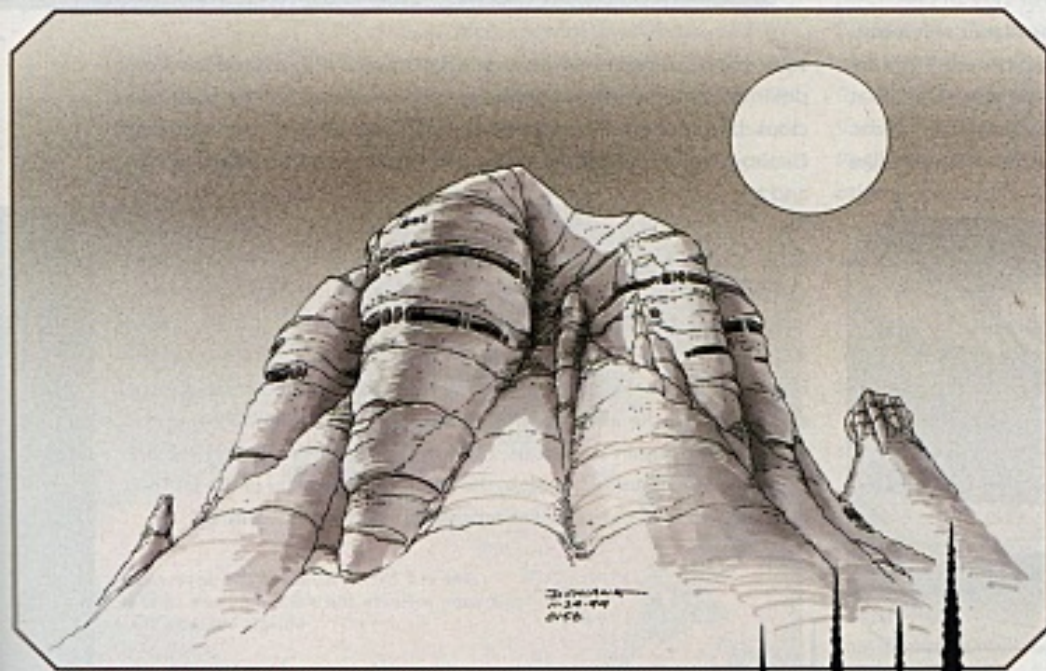
assembly-line plants that sprang up after the Industrial Revolution, before governmental pollution controls and labor laws put the reins on corporate excess. As Ryan Church puts it, "the droid foundry is a super-threatening environment, a place by robots for robots. Soft, living flesh doesn't belong here."

The same could be said of Geonosis itself. The planet's surface looks like Mars as seen through the camera of NASA's Mars Pathfinder probe, and it seems nearly as inhospitable as our own red planet. On Geonosis, water is in short supply, radiation storms regularly scour the atmosphere, and speeder-sized asteroids tumble from Geonosis' planetary ring to blast craters into the landscape. Ominous stone formations stand amid the towering Geonosian spire-hives, leaving little doubt as to why the Episode II designers simply called the world the "rock planet," or, translated into *Star Wars* terminology, Geonosis.

The few lifeforms that scratch out an existence on Geonosis are tough and vicious. The original shooting script included a confrontation

between Obi-Wan's astromech droid R4-P17 and a swarm of relentless insects called rogas, who menaced the little droid just prior to Obi-Wan's capture by Separatist forces. Other casualties of script changes included the massiffs, the dog-lizards glimpsed briefly in the Tusken Raider camp on Tatooine. The massiffs were originally conceived as Geonosian beasts, and they were to have made their debut by ambushing Obi-Wan and dying on the tip of his lightsaber blade. When Lucas cut the scene, ILM moved the massiffs to Tatooine, but in-universe references have since explained that the creatures are found on both worlds, having been

African termite mounds served as inspiration for the colossal spires of Geonosis.



◀ concept sketches by Doug Chiang ▲

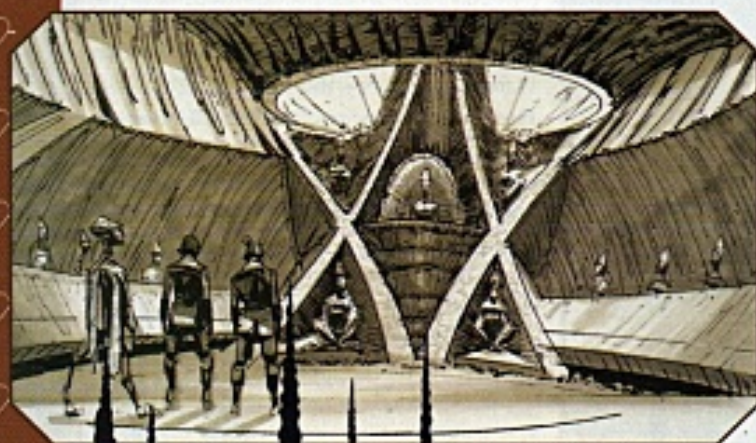


released into the Tatooine wilds when a crashed starship spilled its living cargo of Geonosian massiffs. (As Padmé observes in Episode II, the two desert planets are less than a parsec apart, making interplanetary commerce likely.) The mighty, crab-like acklays also have a dual-planet pedigree, evolving on lush Vendaxa before arriving on Geonosis as imported arena monsters. Wild acklays now populate the scum-covered Ebon Sea, where they lurk, half-submerged, like oversized dragonfly larvae in search of a meal. Dull-witted arrays have been domesticated by the Geonosians as mounts and draft animals. Many other lifeforms on Geonosis are bioluminescent, using their natural light to lure prey during the weeks long "longnights" caused when dense fog collects in the upper atmosphere.

The Geonosians are the most successful of all the planet's lifeforms, owing to their superior brainpower and their high birthrate. They are responsible for Geonosis' most striking features—the spire-hives that stand out against the horizon like skeletal fingers. These formations are not natural but rather stone constructs built from a concrete-like



substance composed of rock powder mixed with excretions from phidnas, small parasites cultivated by the Geonosians for their precious by-products. The elaborate dwellings protect the secretive Geonosians' operations from the planet's frequent radiation storms and the members of the hive from wild acklays and other native horrors. The Episode III art department modeled the exteriors of the spire-hives after African termite mounds, and the interiors after Gothic cathedrals with high arching ceilings and a stark interplay of light and shadow. Erik Tiemens invokes the "Gothic romanticism of scale" when speaking of the interiors, referring to the paintings of Victorian-era British artist John Martin. "Using spatial depth, a spirited color palette, and subduing the amount of detail for the sake of highlighting the actions of our main characters, everything becomes a purely theatrical event. Like dramatic theater, the tumultuous quality of the journey is reinforced with the use of composition, mood, and lighting."



The red that dominates the Geonosian landscape reflects the warlike nature of the world's inhabitants.



In the bellies of the spire-hives lie the droid foundries. These industrial assembly plants churn out battle droids by the gross for deep-pocketed offworld clients. What looks like chaos at first glance is actually the simultaneous operation of hundreds of different, highly regimented manufacturing routines. The Geonosians revere the process so much they hold an annual observance called Meckgin, a celebration of production and toil.

Says Erik Tiemens of the foundry, "The enormous shaft, layered like a Swiss watch pulled apart, with no end in sight, brings to mind some kind of diabolic pit. Soulless robots being stamped out by the thousands provide a great set to exploit scale and vulnerability of our main actors."

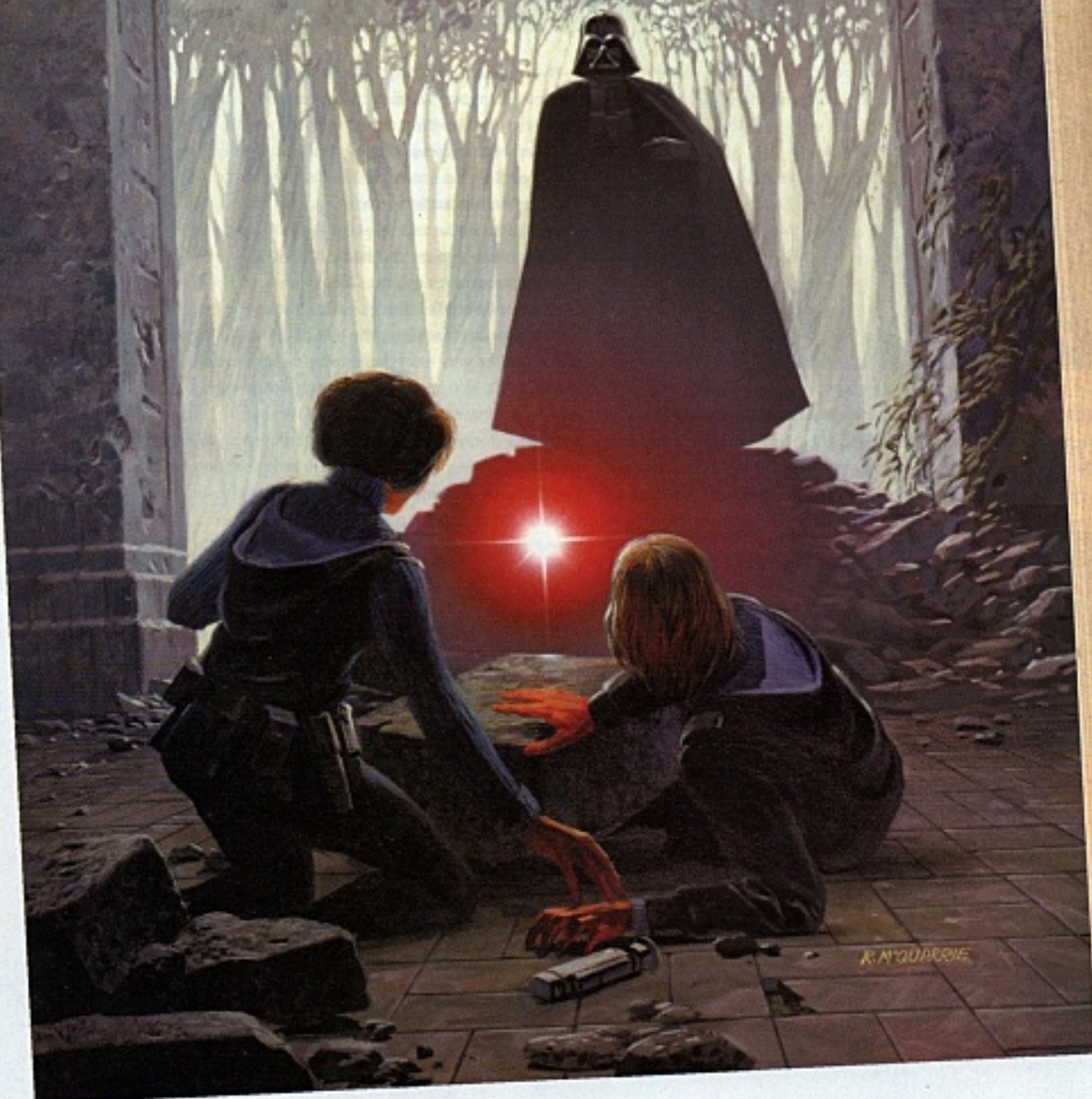


Ryan Church explains that the factory chase was a late addition to the movie, inspired in part by a piece of his own artwork. "I had done a painting of Obi-Wan's point of view down into the factory. It was very red and impressionistic, smoky and hellish. That painting was a little over the top and simplified in terms of color, but George liked it and decided to add the chase sequence as a result of it." For some viewers, Padmé's conveyor-belt chase through the Geonosian stamping machines evokes the spirit of classic Warner Brothers cartoons, making one wish that John Williams's musical score had sampled a bit of Raymond Scott's industrial ditty "Powerhouse."

The execution arena is the site of Episode II's most spectacular set piece, and its very existence is a testament to the Geonosians' love of blood sport. The structure is controlled by the Stalgasin hive colony, which dominates the other hive colonies of Geonosis and whose ruler, Archduke Poggle the Lesser, rose to power thanks to the gladiatorial tradition. During his coup against former ruler Hadiss the Vaunted, Poggle used a trained acklay to murder his rival, then disposed of other political opponents in bloody public spectacles in the execution arena. The staff that Poggle carries in Episode II is made from Hadiss's limb bones. Ryan Church designed the balcony from which Poggle and Count Dooku watch the executions of Anakin, Obi-Wan, and Padmé. "My idea was to extend it out over the arena like a ship's prow, and to add that distinctive alien-gothic detailing that has the look of bony rocks."

Poggle loses his prize when the clone troopers of Kamino leave their watery birth-world to conquer the dusty wastelands of Geonosis. In return, Kamino suffers its own damage when Separatist forces stage a counterassault, as seen in Dark Horse Comics' *Star Wars Republic* #50. It's still unknown whether Kamino and Geonosis will return in Episode III, but with the despotic regime of the Empire preparing to engulf the galaxy, triumph in the Clone Wars will ultimately prove hollow for the victor. ☹

NOVEL APPROACH



R. M. QUARRE

STAR WARS FICTION

from Film Adaptations to The New Jedi Order and Beyond

STAR
WARS

"Another galaxy, another time."

With these words, novelist Alan Dean Foster set the stage not only for his 1976 novelization of *Star Wars* but also for an entire universe of licensed fiction. In the decade that followed, there was no shortage of *Star Wars* fiction in the form of newspaper strips, radio dramas, comic books, cartoons, TV specials, and of course novels.

Continuity was much looser then than it is now, however, with few connections between the various media. The audio drama *Rebel Mission to Ord Mantell*, for instance, directly contradicted the newspaper strips, while *Splinter of the Mind's Eye* and the Marvel saga both contained story elements some felt violated the plot of *The Empire Strikes Back*.

This era of *Star Wars* fiction was marked by conflicting accounts of the bounty hunter on Ord Mantell, the evacuation of the Yavin base for Hoth, and the first face-to-face meeting of Luke and Vader, while Luke's mastery of the Force and Han and Leia's relationship changed from one story to the next. As a result, though fun to read, some of those early tales don't fit as seamlessly into the overall picture as later works.

By 1986, interest in *Star Wars* had waned in the wake of what was then expected to be the last *Star Wars* film. For the next five years, the only publishers to produce *Star Wars* tales were West End Games, whose *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* debuted in 1987 and Blackthorne Comics, with three issues of 3D comic books. Otherwise, *Star Wars* fiction slipped out of the mainstream; issues of the Marvel series started appearing in four-for-a-dollar boxes, while copies of the classic Han Solo and Lando Calrissian novels from Del Rey could be found only in second-hand bookstores.

BY RICH HANDLEY



Star Wars novels by Timothy Zahn

Rebirth

In 1991, that all changed with the publication of a new *Star Wars* novel by Timothy Zahn entitled *Heir to the Empire*, as well as a six-issue comic book miniseries from Tom Veitch and Cam Kennedy called *Dark Empire*. Immensely popular, the Zahn and Veitch/Kennedy works ushered in a vibrant new era in *Star Wars* fiction. What we now know as the Expanded Universe continued to evolve as Bantam Books and Dark Horse Comics added a slew of new titles to the *Star Wars* mythos.

With these new stories came new directions—and some big changes for the *Star Wars* characters. No longer just a rogue and a smuggler, Han Solo married Leia and became a family man; the Solos raised three children: twins Jacen and Jaina, and younger brother Anakin, each with their own spin-off novel adventures. Luke Skywalker, meanwhile, determined to restore the Jedi Knights to their former glory, searched the galaxy for potential students to attend his Jedi academy. He also encountered romance with Callista, Gaeriel Captison, and others before finding true love with the woman who had once been assigned to kill him: Mara Jade, the Emperor's Hand. From the ashes of the Empire rose a New Republic, built upon the promise of restoring freedom to the galaxy.

The Bantam series introduced a vast number of new characters to the mythos and expanded on many characters seen on screen for only a few seconds. Wedge Antilles and the pilots of Rogue Squadron became fully developed characters starring in their own series of *X-Wing* novels and comics. The denizens of both the Mos Eisley cantina and Jabba's palace were given fascinating personalities and back-stories. Authors expanded on lives and motivations of the bounty hunters of *The Empire Strikes Back*, sometimes in unexpected ways. And numerous Imperial warlords and dark side Force-users emerged to take their best shot at dominating the galaxy in Palpatine's wake, only to be reminded again and again that in *Star Wars*, good always triumphs over evil.

Other publishers—Scholastic, Berkley Books, Dorling Kindersley, and Ballantine—soon joined the publishing family, making *Star Wars* a bigger literary property than it had ever been before. In fact, in the decade since the "rebirth" of *Star Wars*, the number of adult and young adult novels has skyrocketed to well over a hundred, while the comic-book count has already hit the staggering 500-issue mark.

Growing Pains

Lucy Autrey Wilson, Director of Publishing at Lucas Licensing, was integral to the resurgence of *Star Wars* fiction. "When it was decided in 1989 to begin new *Star Wars* stories," she recalls, "there was a plan from the beginning to develop and maintain a strong continuity. The continuity was founded on the established films and radio dramas, and the material new authors were bringing to the mix."

Initially, Wilson says, there was not a strong attempt to tie new material to everything that had been published in the past, such as the Marvel



Dark Empire by Tom Veitch & Cam Kennedy

tales or newspaper strips. As such, many of the Bantam novels paid little heed to the earlier stories. However, that policy has since changed. "Now that we are blessed with a continuity database called the Holocron, thanks to our in-house expert Leland Chee and to Wizards of the Coast, we have gone back and tried to integrate everything ever published."

The *Star Wars* universe was already huge, and it was getting larger by the month. The post-*Return of the Jedi* era, says Wilson, was "an open playing field," and new authors were invited to set their stories whenever they saw fit, from zero to twenty-five years after the films. Adds Lucas Licensing Managing Editor Sue Rostoni, "We gave the Bantam authors very general guidelines. They could write only in the period following the *Return of the Jedi*; they had to be true to the characters and maintain the *Star Wars* sensibility. We didn't allow authors to dispose of major characters unless they had created them." Otherwise, the Bantam authors had a good deal of free reign in which to tell their stories.

While the Bantam books were popular, the seeming randomness of the books' publishing order was a source of confusion. "As the program with Bantam progressed," says Wilson, "it became apparent that



Bantam's X-Wing series of novels and comics

readers were having trouble fitting in events and seeing the larger picture, so we began putting timelines in the books and comics. However, toward the end of the program, authors found they had to read enormous amounts of resource material to ensure that their story dovetailed not only in the events before their setting, but also in the events that happened after, in novels already published." Says Wilson, "it became quite difficult to maintain an individual character's personal growth arc, so we decided to develop one strong continuous story as our next adventure in publishing."

Therefore, when the *Star Wars* license passed from Bantam over to Ballantine/Del Rey in 1999, a number of changes went with it. Instead of randomly placed trilogies and one-shots, Del Rey and LucasBooks were charged with putting together one ongoing storyline under a single imprint, complete with a new recurring threat to the galaxy, a new roster



Lucy Autrey Wilson
Director of Publications
Lucas Licensing, Ltd.

"When authors write individual novels, they tend to kill off a lot of the cool new characters they invent."

—Lucy Autrey Wilson,
Director of Publications, Lucas Licensing, Ltd.

of characters to join those previously established, and an eye on making sure readers would no longer have trouble keeping the chronology straight in their heads. Thus was born The New Jedi Order.

Maturity

"The New Jedi Order books from Del Rey," Wilson explains, "are written and published chronologically and span five years. This was quite a risk on our part, as we weren't certain we could sustain a strong readership through this long series." With The New Jedi Order drawing near an end, Wilson points out that "the series is as strong as ever—and getting stronger as each book releases. As editors, it is easier to manage the continuity within the series, and people seem very happy with having the books come out chronologically." She adds, "When authors write individual novels, they tend to kill off a lot of the cool new characters they invent. As a result, the Bantam novels had a lot of different enemies. By coming up with a five-

year master plan in The New Jedi Order story arc, we avoided this problem."

As with the Bantam books, the Del Rey line brought with it a number of changes to the *Star Wars* galaxy, including the marriage of Luke and Mara (in Dark Horse Comics' *Star Wars: Union* #1–4) and the birth of their son, Ben. According to Rostoni, each of the The New Jedi Order authors knows up front where in the timeline their novel begins and ends and are told what major events to include. "But even with those major events,"

Rostoni points out, "flexibility is paramount. Continuity and character integrity, along with believable situations, are important, and great new plots are essential. Approvals are handled by the Lucasfilm editorial team, working in close partnership with Del Rey's editors."

Shelly Shapiro, Del Rey's Editorial Director in charge of *Star Wars* fiction, was among those who developed The New Jedi Order concept. "We wanted to keep more control over the development of unfolding events in the galaxy," Shapiro says, "in order to allow for more character development and natural growth. From that idea came the idea for one long story arc." According to Shapiro, several goals were foremost in her mind. "First of all... we wanted it to feel like there was a single central story running throughout the series. We didn't actually intend



Star Wars: Union #1–4

for it to be quite so linear—we really did plan for a lot of side adventures to occur in the paperbacks—but it just didn't turn out that way."

"Second," adds Shapiro, "many of us were tired of the already over-resuscitated Empire." Following the defeats of Grand Admiral Thrawn in *Heir to the Empire* and the cloned Emperor in *Dark Empire*, the books featured a long chain of Imperials-of-the-week with plans of galactic domination. This was something Shapiro and others wished to avoid.

"Frankly, I always felt that allowing the Emperor to come back—even via a clone—was a mistake. I felt it took away from the victory of the first three movies, minimized all Luke, Leia, and Han had fought for and won. I thought it was long past time the galaxy faced a new threat."



Sue Rostoni
Managing Editor, Lucas Licensing, Ltd.





Crimson Empire II #1-4

Enter the Yuuzhan Vong

Creating the Yuuzhan Vong was a collaborative effort. Dark Horse Comics introduced the first vanguard of the Yuuzhan Vong invasion, Nom Anor, in its second *Crimson Empire* series, "Council of Blood." Anor pulled the strings of Imperial upstart Xandel Carivus, who yearned to rule what was left of the Empire.

Authors Mike Richardson and Randy Stradley's take on Anor's species was that, being from another galaxy, they were truly alien in form, and thus wore humanoid-looking armored suits when interacting with beings in the *Star Wars* galaxy. The concept of the Yuuzhan Vong being non-humanoid was later changed, for a variety of reasons, and the original concept for the trans-galactic invasion evolved with the addition of input from other creators.

"Working together with Ballantine and the early authors," Rostoni recalls, "we created a background for the species and some general attributes. We wanted a species whose technology was organic in nature, which considered anything mechanical a blasphemy."

The initial creative team added a fanatical religious aspect to the Yuuzhan Vong, as well as a penchant for war and sacrifice. They decided that the invaders had slowly destroyed their own galaxy with biotechnology, Rostoni reports, and thus needed a new home.

Not all the details were worked out from the beginning, and subsequent authors have added their own attributes to the Yuuzhan Vong. In fact, the original concept was different in at least one profound way.

"In our first creative sessions," says Shapiro, "the Yuuzhan Vong were dark Force-users from another galaxy. That was nixed from on high. So we made them completely non-Force."

That change led to an intriguing twist on the original films. "An interesting point about the original movies were that the bad guys were high-tech—the stormtroopers wore armor, there was the Death Star, and so on—while the good guys seemed more provincial, more low-tech—with the exception of the X-wings. But by the time *The New Jedi Order* takes place, the New Republic is pretty high-tech. As a matter of fact, when I read my first Bantam *Star Wars* books, I was surprised at how 'science fiction-y' they felt—much more so than the movies, in my opinion."



Shelly Shapiro
Editorial Director, Del Rey

The obvious decision was to mirror the contrast seen in the movies—but with the roles reversed: the heroes being high-tech, the villains having a bio-based culture. "From that, more evolved, including some Yuuzhan Vong developments that I wish we'd stayed away from," laughs Shapiro, "though I won't name them!"

The Inevitability of Death

In 1977, the wonder and innocence of Luke Skywalker reflected the naiveté of the world. By 1991, audiences were less naïve but still quite optimistic about the future—and in keeping with the parallel, the early Bantam novels had a darker tone than the movies, but the good guys still won.

These days, our world is a much more frightening place, and it's no longer certain that the good guys will win. Interestingly, such has become the current state of the *Star Wars* universe as well, for mortality has become a possibility in the Del Rey novels—even for a main character. Shapiro considers it natural that world changes would affect the tone of the *Star Wars* universe, for those changes would have affected the creators of the stories.

"Authors and editors have a different view of the world these days," she says, "and I think readers expect different things of their entertainment. For example, compare current SF movies with *A New Hope*, and the latter can seem very slow. These days, thanks to MTV, moviegoers expect a faster pace and a lot of flashing between scenes."

Even so, the unexpected death of beloved central characters in R.A. Salvatore's *Vector Prime* and Troy Denning's *Star by Star* stunned fans. The plan to kill off some major characters, says Shapiro, came from "the feeling of stagnation that seemed to hang over the earlier books. Nothing significant ever changed in them. Character development was stuck in a rut. No one seemed to know what to do with Han anymore, now that he wasn't a smuggler or military guy; Luke was impossible to deal with, since he'd become so omnipotent; Leia was getting too soft with all her constant diplomacy."

One From Column B

Readers know that they come from a distant galaxy, but where on earth did they get that unusual name? The words "Yuuzhan Vong" were spotted on a restaurant menu in New York during a meeting between Ballantine editors and Lucy Autrey Wilson.



Star Wars: The New Jedi Order (series to date)



"In our first creative sessions, the Yuuzhan Vong were dark Force-users from another galaxy."

—Shelly Shapiro,
Editorial Director, Del Rey

Shapiro's goal: to shake up the characters, to show that they can't count on surviving everything thrown at them.

In a joint meeting with Del Rey and Dark Horse editors and authors, a trial balloon was floated to have Luke die in an upcoming novel. This suggestion was, fortunately, vetoed by George Lucas himself. However, Del Rey and Lucasfilm still felt that a major character's death was needed to convince readers that they couldn't count on the status quo forever.

"Everyone was convinced that only Luke's death would sufficiently shake-up the readership," says Dark Horse editor Randy Stradley, "but the alternative seemed obvious to me. I pointed out that there was a character whose death would have an impact far beyond his overall presence in the ongoing story line. I said, 'Kill Chewie—kill the family dog.' Of course, I didn't know how right I was!"

Says Shapiro, "Losing Chewie shook Han to the core, as well as affecting the other characters. It also upped the ante for the readers. I think when you truly fear for the life of a character, then that character's victories become that much more powerful."

Still, not everyone would agree, as she admits. Many readers complained that so much death is making the *Star Wars* galaxy "too dark and dreary." Fury over Anakin Solo's death, though, surprised Shapiro. "The funny thing was that so many people seemed to dislike the kids so much that I was worried no one would care! But I guess we succeeded in building up Anakin's character enough, because people were quite unhappy with us when he died."

"Anakin's death," Rostoni reflects, "may not have had the tremendous shock of Chewie's death, but many readers had similar reactions. Anakin was well liked, and obviously Luke's protégé. Readers reacted with outrage that we didn't stop with Chewie. Now, not only had we engineered the death of another main character, but also another character whom readers loved." She adds, "Some people look to *Star Wars* for an escape from reality, an escape from heart-wrenching world events, and were very angry with us for shattering this safe place they came to for refuge."

The death of a main character—of any character—is not an easy one, and Chewie's death was an especially difficult decision," Rostoni acknowledges. In the Bantam line, she feels, readers were relaxed in the knowledge that no matter the crisis, it was only a matter of pages

Got an Opinion?

Star Wars Insider wants to know what settings, characters, and time periods you want to read about after Episode III. Send your comments—but no story ideas—to Rebel Rumblings, 3245 146th Place SE, Bellevue, WA 98007. Neither Lucasfilm nor Del Rey will read unsolicited fictional ideas.

before everything was successfully resolved. In crafting *The New Jedi Order*, then, it was important to Rostoni that the *Star Wars* books regain that lost edge of realism and tension. "War is war, and people—including loved ones—are killed. Death, as well as life, has profound meaning and consequences, and we do not make these decisions lightly." Despite the negative reaction from some readers, Rostoni and Wilson stand behind their decision as one that will "strengthen characters and give our readers hope in the face of adversity." *Star Wars* is ultimately about good winning over evil, they stress, and that concept is still alive and well in *Star Wars* publishing. "Readers may be very surprised," hints Wilson, "at the unexpected ending of *The New Jedi Order* series."

(A New) Hope for the Future

"We are always looking for new authors," says Rostoni, "who can translate *Star Wars* into their own voices and still be faithful to the property." So how can writer-hopefuls become part of *The New Jedi Order* author line-up? Bottom line: they can't.

"Before folks start sending in their *Star Wars* novels—the ones they've been working on for years—please know that Lucasfilm and Del Rey do not read any unsolicited manuscripts or outlines." All *Star Wars* novelists, she says, are carefully selected after discussions with Del Rey; all are professional writers with published work in the science fiction and/or fantasy genres, and many are award-winners.

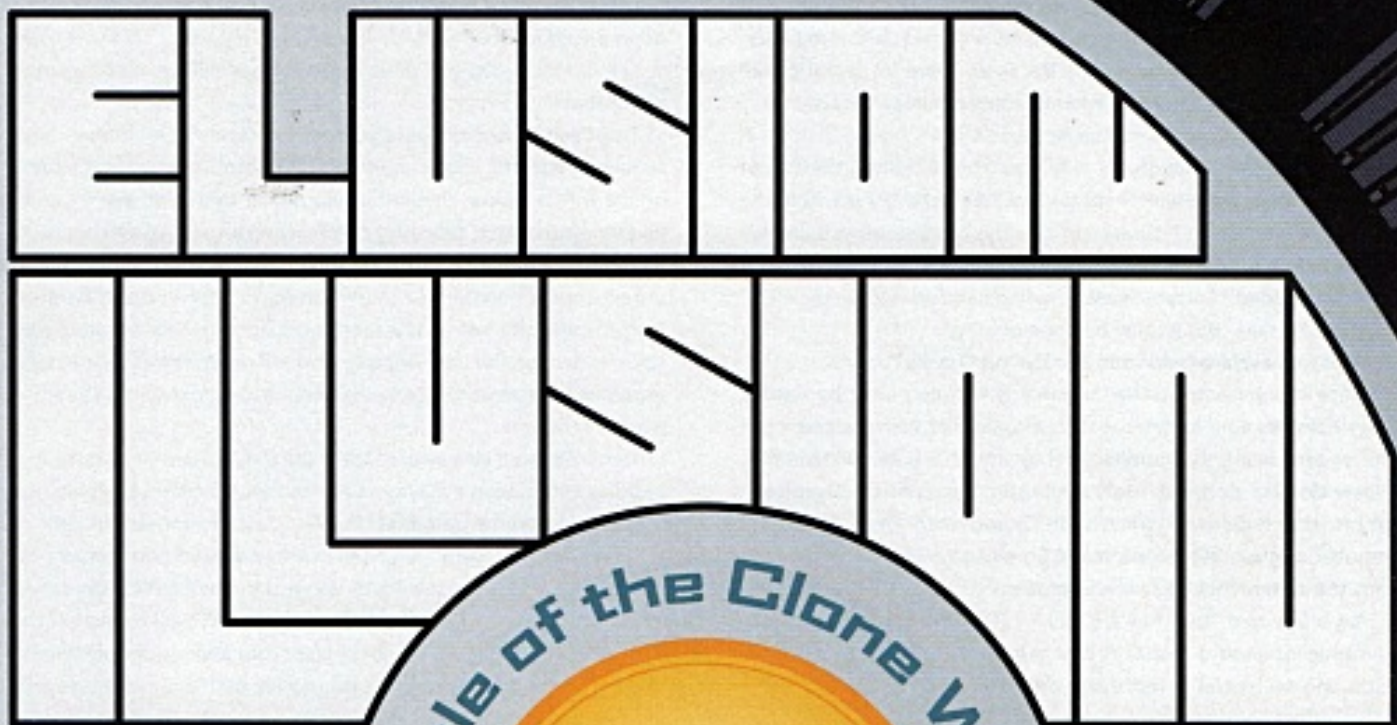
Fan responses to the novels, comics, or any other branch of the *Star Wars* Expanded Universe are, of course, always welcome. "We love to hear from our fans about what characters and periods of history they would like to read about after the release of Episode III in 2005," says Wilson.

Fans can take heart, for no shortage of *Star Wars* fiction is set to come their way. Wilson assures that several "exciting new projects" are in development to take readers up through 2005, and *Star Wars Insider* readers can be sure to expect updates as more information becomes available. In June 2003, Del Rey is set to release *Shatterpoint*, in which Mace Windu returns to his Separatist-occupied homeworld to rescue fellow Jedi Master Depa Billaba. This will be the publisher's first book in *The Clone Wars* saga, an event that will span novels, youth fiction, comics, video games, e-books, and short story fiction. "After 2005," Wilson adds, "clouded the future is."

Shapiro admits that there are no plans as of yet for what will happen after *The New Jedi Order*. "We are limited only by our imaginations, I suppose. The sky's the limit." ☐







A Tale of the Clone Wars

by
**Michael A.
Stackpole**

illustrated by Jan Duursema & Joe Wayne

SEVEN DAYS AFTER THE BATTLE OF GEONOSIS.

Aayla Secura suppressed a rising sense of anxiety as she entered the council chamber high in the Jedi Temple. Jedi Master Mace Windu stood with his back to one of the arched windows that revealed an expanse of Coruscant cityscape. To the right of the doorway stood another Jedi sniffing at the petals of a flower placed in a wall niche. He was a Caamasi with long and supple limbs. Golden down covered his body, with purple fur masking his eyes and sweeping up in stripes to his crown.

Aayla bowed toward Mace Windu. "Forgive my lateness, Master."

At first, Mace nodded slowly, as if only distantly hearing her. Then he looked up at the Twi'lek and gave her a more certain nod, clasping his hands at the small of his back. Aayla felt a wave of serenity flow through the Force, from the Jedi Master to her. He said, "Though the war leaves us thinking that there's not a second to lose, you are not late. Right now, the portal of opportunity we're afforded is not yet closed."

He nodded to the other Jedi. "This is Ylenic It'kla, a Jedi Knight of Caamas. He'll work with you on this particular assignment."

The Caamasi offered Aayla a slender hand, and she shook it. Ylenic held her hand firmly, but she knew he was exerting only a fraction of his strength. The fluid motion with which he had turned to greet her suggested speed and power that would make him a formidable warrior. With his long reach, Ylenic could be a deadly duelist if he were at all practiced with a lightsaber.

Aayla smiled at the Caamasi and looked back to Mace. "How am I to serve, Master Windu?"

"This is a delicate mission, Aayla, one that requires guile and intelligence, not just martial prowess. You have proven yourself with the latter at Geonosis."

"But the former, Master?"

"I have meditated on this matter, and you are the right choice."

"Yes, Master," said Aayla. She wondered what Windu was leaving unsaid, but she quelled the questions in her mind.

Mace nodded in acknowledgement of her discipline. "Corellia, due to the influence of Garm bel Iblis, has declared itself neutral in the current conflict. Despite this stance, both the Republic and Confederacy of Independent Systems exert some influence on the world. Along with a few other neutral worlds, Corellia has become a haven for refugees from both sides."

Aayla raised one eyebrow as she grasped the implication. "And havens for those who would profit from trade with both sides?"

"Your knowledge of trading practices on Ryloth serves you well, Aayla." Mace smiled briefly before composing his face in a more serious expression. "In preparing for the war, the Techno Union started many development projects.

Most of the researchers had little concept of how their work would be used, but one of them figured things out. His name is Ratri Tane. He stole his project's critical files and the only working prototype of some very valuable circuitry. He's sent his wife and child into hiding and he has made his way to Corellia. From there he seeks to hire transport to a place where he and his family can live in peace."

"Tane is from Corellia?" asked Aayla.

"No, Coruscant, though his wife was from Corellia—the city of Coronet." Mace ran a hand over his jaw. "We believe Tane stole the prototype and files as insurance in case the Techno Union found his family before his return."

Aayla nodded. "And you want us to find him and retrieve the files?"

"Yes," he said. "But it must be done quietly."

"Will we have any help from the Jedi on Corellia?"

Mace shook his head. "No, and that is why you must be careful. They have become somewhat . . . territorial, and with the politics of the system being as complex as they are, this is understandable. When Corellia declared itself neutral in this conflict, loyalties within the Jedi there were split. Siding with the Republic might bring the war to the Corellian system, the system they've sworn to protect."

Aayla frowned. "But they are Jedi."

Ylenic opened a hand. "They are Jedi, and will defend the peace in their system."

"And if we need them to defend peace in the galaxy?" said Aayla.

Mace shook his head. "That is a matter for later, Aayla. Your mission is to find Tane and extract him. Ylenic has been to Corellia before. The two of you will fly a smuggling ship, and you will be in command. You will be looking to move any number of cargoes, but will prefer passengers. To Tane, you will appear to be the perfect escape from Corellia. Briefing files have already been loaded into your ship's computer."

Aayla smiled, much preferring the undercover role of a smuggler to being a slave dressed in too little to conceal a comlink, much less a lightsaber. "I've seen plenty of smugglers and seedy pilots. I can do this."

Mace nodded and held up a hand. "You can expect to find the Techno Union hiring a variety of criminals to find Tane. You must be especially wary of Gotal. Their horns make them sensitive to emotions and possibly even the Force. They are common among the criminals of Coronet, so watch for them."

"I understand," she said, growing excited at the prospect of this mission. Through the Force, she sensed both Mace and Ylenic react to her unchecked delight. She reined in that emotion and glanced down. "I shall be very careful, Master."

Mace nodded solemnly. "I know in you we've made the right choice."

have for a cargo?"

Ylenic punched a button on the command console. "Foodstuffs, mostly. Delicacies that ex-patriots can't live without. We'll get a good price for them."

She laughed. "Do you think the Jedi Council is much concerned about that?"

The Caamasi shook his head and punched the ignition control sequence into the ship's computer. The ship's twin turbines came online with a whine. Ylenic shunted power to the repulsorlift coils, and the ship floated delicately before rising into Coruscant airspace.

They were departing from a commercial spaceport so they would attract little or no attention. Although Aayla did not like to dwell on the prospect, she was certain there were both mechanical and living spies watching the Jedi Temple and all other sensitive areas on Coruscant to transmit data to the Separatist leader Count Dooku—wherever he was.

Ylenic received clearance to leave the atmosphere, set the navigational computer for the prescribed outbound vector, and switched on the autopilot. The *Flare* left the angular streams of

daily traffic behind, and soared past the highest towers to join a thin line of ships departing the Republic's capital. Aayla watched the other ships, big and small, private and commercial, and even a few vessels with the distinctive red hulls denoting official Republic duty.

"How many of those ships do you figure are leaving on secret missions?" she asked.

The Caamasi smiled. "I would think, Aayla, that all of them carry secrets of one sort or another. Illicit operations, I would assume for most. A mission like ours? One or two, perhaps."

"You're probably right."

"Am I?" The Caamasi's amber eyes softened slightly. "How do you draw that conclusion? I am guessing without a shred of evidence—no sense of the Force, just idle speculation."

"It seemed correct to me." Aayla felt color rise to her cheeks and streak her lekku.

"This question should not be a cause of embarrassment, Aayla. The Force might well speak to you in ways it does not me."

She thought about that possibility as the ship made the transition from atmosphere to the dark cold of space. The *Flare* inverted, giving her a view of Coruscant's surface, especially the glowing lines and flickering lights of the night side. The skylanes appeared like giant circuits with luminescent electrons moving along them. She picked one out and focused the Force on it, trying to receive some sense of its purpose. She felt nothing she could consider even the merest of impressions.

"Probably not the Force," she admitted, "but a guess on my part, too."

Ylenic smiled and scanned the computer readout. "At least we are guessing along the same lines. This bodes well for our effort. We are clear for the jump to hyperspace."

Aayla nodded and gave the order, "Go."

"You must be especially wary of Gotal."

Aayla settled into the co-pilot's seat in the cockpit of the Kuat Leisure 121-B modified yacht *Flare*. "Gear's all stowed. What do we

The Caamasi flicked two levers forward, engaging the hyperdrive. The ship lurched forward and the stars went from pinpricks to bars all pointed down into a well that exploded up at them and filled the viewport with bright light. Aayla raised her hand to shield her eyes before the viewport dampers kicked in.

Ylenic nodded. "We will make the journey in four jumps. This course will add several hours over a direct trip, but it will mask our point of origin. It will also bring us into the Corellian system on a vector that is not much watched by pirates."

"Good thinking," she said dryly. "I would have suggested or approved that planning."

Ylenic reached out with his right hand and patted her on the left shoulder. "Yes, Aayla, you are in charge of this operation, but as your pilot I sought not to bother you with this sort of tedious detail."

She gave him a quick smile and a nod. "I do wonder why Master Windu placed me in command."

"Do you?" The Caamasi canted his head to the side. "This means you doubt the wisdom of our Masters, or else you doubt yourself."

"Our Masters, no." She shook her head firmly. "But myself, yes, a bit. I am hardly the most experienced Jedi Knight in the galaxy, or even on this ship. You have been a Knight longer than I, so I wonder why I am not subordinate to you?"

"This is simple: while I have been to Corellia before, I have filled a more traditional role. The Caamasi often counsel and mediate, and this is what I do most of the time. My skills as a pilot are likewise valued, but seldom have I spent time among the people we will meet while seeking Tane."

Ylenic's voice had strength, but it came quiet and warm. She liked listening to him, and watching his right hand move through the air as he spoke made his comments almost hypnotic. What he had said about the Caamasi was true, and they were highly valued for their skills. They were also known as pacifists and, try as she might, she could not remember ever seeing or hearing of another Caamasi Jedi.

Aayla commented on that fact, and Ylenic nodded as if expecting the remark. "It is true, we Caamasi have not produced many Jedi. It is also true that I am a pacifist."

"But here you are, willing to take part in a war." She frowned. "Doesn't that violate your philosophy?"

"There is a point at which pacifism, while seeming good, can serve the dark side."

"How can that be?"

His fingers extended, then half-curved back in on themselves. "There are those, especially within the Confederacy, who could characterize the Jedi as bloody-handed and aggressive warriors. Is that accurate?"

"No. Jedi are defenders of peace, counselors. We use our combat skills only as a last resort, only when forced to."

"Exactly. So, while we value peace and abhor violence, we know there is a point where we may have to place our lives between those of innocents and people who would harm them."

"Clearly."

"It is just as clear, Aayla, when pacifism becomes evil. If beings are capable of protecting others but refuse to take action to preserve their own sense of peace, they are being selfish. They place themselves and their sense of peace over the peace of others, and so they defend a philosophy instead of lives. In this way, they fail everyone. This is where

their choice is evil."

She nodded slowly. To do nothing in the face of evil was to condone it and permit it to prosper.

"This Tane, then, is he being evil?"

Ylenic's face screwed up in concentration, and Aayla caught a quick sense of some emotion she couldn't identify.

"He is acting to save his family," said the Caamasi, "so I would think not."

She nodded. "What you say is wise."

The Caamasi nodded appreciatively. "I have a question, if you do not mind? Why do you doubt yourself?"

"I am young. I am inexperienced." She searched his face, looking for any sign in his amber eyes that these reasons rang true for him. She caught flickers through the Force, but nothing more. "This is a delicate mission. If it goes wrong, it might create a bad feeling with the Corellian government. They might see our effort as the Republic interfering in their affairs, and that might help ally them with the Separatists. That is quite a lot of responsibility to deal with."

"Good points, all." His eyes narrowed slightly. "Does it concern you that you have doubts?"

Aayla thought for a moment, then a moment longer. "No, I think it is good. I trust in my skills and training, but without doubts, without realizing that things could spin out of control, I would become arrogant, a failing that could lead to the dark side."

"Very good, Aayla Secura." Ylenic smiled broadly. "Now you know why you are worthy of being entrusted with so important a mission."



Both Aayla and Ylenic managed to sleep and meditate on the journey, so they arrived in the Corellian system refreshed and ready to act. A pair of security fighters looked them over as they came in past Selonia, but flight control cleared them on a vector for Corellia. The city of Coronet was just slipping into dusk as they landed at one of the myriad spaceports in the seaside city.

The lights had just begun going in the section of the town known as Treasure Ship Row. Aayla found that the place paled in comparison to Coruscant, but that could rightly be said of any other city in the Republic. Though there had been little in the way of cloud cover on the flight in, once Ylenic landed and popped the hatch, the city's humidity dragged at her.

Aayla shivered. "This air just feels wrong."

Ylenic sniffed and wrinkled his nose. "It smells worse."

They had chosen clothes that suited both their assumed roles and their personal preferences. For Ylenic this was a red kilt that ran to his knees, with small boots and a sleeveless blue jacket that buttoned to the throat and had long tails in the back. Over that he had thrown a black cloak that shrouded his form and let him easily conceal his lightsaber.

Aayla bound her lekku in a braid of black and brown leather strips that attached to her traditional Twi'lek

headgear. Black boots came to her knees, and red- and black-striped leggings from there to her waist. A black and red tunic that was cut to expose to midriff and cleavage matched the leggings. While she took no great pleasure in revealing clothes, she knew such raiment was both unrestrictive in combat and distracting during trade negotiations. A black nerf-hide jacket cut short enough to reveal of band of blue flesh at her waist completed the outfit and let her conceal her lightsaber within easy reach.

A number of "commodities brokers" approached the ship and immediately began bargaining for the cargo. Aayla haggled with a pleasure that surprised her. She mentally split the lot and sold off each piece, pitting broker against broker. She refrained from using the Force to sway the brokers, but could sense avarice building as the bidding grew furious, and then panic rising as the prices became too dear. Within half an hour, she had disposed of everything at a tidy profit.

As she finished, Aayla noticed Ylenic talking to two of the brokers who had withdrawn from bargaining as they learned the *Flare* carried nothing in the way of serious contraband. She politely refused the offer of a drink with a flapping Toydarian and wandered over to join the Caamasi. The two shady brokers, a cloaked human and a Devaronian, acknowledged her with a nod before leaving.

Ylenic smiled at her. "You enjoyed yourself."

Aayla nodded but then froze for a moment. "I thought I had kept my emotions closed to the Force."

"You did, but you also smiled, and your victims were relieved when the bidding was over." He gestured casually in the direction of the retreating brokers. "Those two asked what we were looking to take away with us. I suggested that while the hold was sufficient for almost anything, a yacht carries passengers better than cargo. Word will spread, and if Tane has been making inquiries, he will find us."

From the data files they'd received from Master Windu, Aayla knew they were looking for a human male of average height and weight, with green eyes, light hair, and a recently grown full beard. As humans went, he was not bad looking and not very old. Still, there was something about him that seemed unlike a research scientist.

Then again, she mused silently, if he were nothing more than a typical dataworm, he never would have undertaken the theft or sent his family away to safety.

Ylenic pointed to one of the passageways heading north. "Our friends indicated that those who seek quiet passage off Corellia often look for opportunities at a cantina called Homestar. I suggested we would find our way there."

They headed out together, with Ylenic clearly shortening his strides to match her gait. Despite wearing a cloak, he moved quietly. If he weren't there at the edge of her vision, she might have thought he had vanished.

Losing him would have been easy, she thought, as they moved from the freight section of the spaceport to the passenger terminal.

Throng of people milled about—predominantly human and Selonian, but with enough Neimoidians, Devaronians, Weequays, Klatoolinians, and even Bith to demonstrate what an important crossroads Corellia had become since the war began.

Aayla watched for Gotal and spied one lurking near a group of Neimoidians. She saw no other obvious dangers, and even from the Neimoidians she sensed no malevolence. She knew it was foolish to assume that every member of a particular species would be in lock step with its leadership, but she decided to err on the side of caution and keep her senses open for potential enemies.

"I've spotted a Gotal," she whispered to Ylenic.

"There was a second." When he noticed her surprise, the Caamasi tapped his nose lightly. "They have a scent of old sweat and mildew."

"And I thought they looked bad."

They exited through another portal and turned east. The crowd thinned as they moved farther from the spaceport. On the kilometer-long walk, the passages grew dim in a few spots, but they encountered no trouble. That didn't mean Aayla couldn't sense people lurking in the darkness, but she and Ylenic were judged by the cut of their clothes, so they aroused no special interest in the urban predators.

Treasure Ship Row—or simply "the Row," as natives seemed to call it—surprised her because of the cosmetic overlay of lights and signs. All were bright and kept in good repair. They gave the area an air of respectability, which she suspected was more to shield the establishments from the scorn of its commercial neighbors than any fear of outrage from its visitors.

Homestar stood a quarter of the way along the Row, on the south side. It could have been mistaken for a planetarium on any other world. The music issuing forth might have dissuaded some from making that mistake, but otherwise the façade seemed plain. It did not excite the senses and, save for the odd collection of people coming and going, could have been described as unremarkable.

As Aayla and Ylenic entered the place, however, "unremarkable" gave way to "impossible." The doorway opened on a tall and wide set of stairs leading down into a round pit floor. A circular bar dominated the center, with concentric rings of round and curved tables spreading out around it. All around the walls and hanging from the ceiling were platforms and cages in which dancers undulated to the music. The band played on a stage directly opposite the stairs, and the area in front of their stage had been cleared for patrons to dance.

And dancing they were, in combinations of species that defied cataloging. And the manner in which they danced sent a shiver down Aayla's spine. She knew enough of the art to pass as a dancer, and she had a Twi'lek's delight in the sensuous movements a body can make. Those beings on the dance floor might well have been having fun, but to her eye they appeared to be writhing spastically as the result of some excruciating poison.

Ylenic shut his nostrils completely. "No, I do not like how they look, either."

**The Gotal
spotted Tane at
the same time
as the Jedi**

The Caamas led the way down to the floor and halfway around on the left. In the centermost of the table-rings they found a small space where they could stand. Ylenic moved around so he faced away from the bar, and she stood facing him, allowing them to cover the entire cantina. They punched in their drink orders on a small datapad built into the table. Soon a droid brought them two tumblers of Corellian whiskey, which they left untouched on the table.

As she studied people, Aayla could definitely see that Jedi on Corellia must have their hands full. The war had exacerbated the situation by bringing in a lot of beings under a lot of pressure—and adding to that mix agents of either side who wanted to cause trouble.

And if war came to this place . . . she shivered. Geonosians had been a wasteland before the battle, but the aftermath was still hideous. Droids blown into shards, Geonosians dead in droves, Jedi killed and hideously maimed. And the losses among the clone ranks were appalling.

Ylenic laid a hand on her forearm. "What is the matter?"

"Just remembering the first battle," she said.

Ylenic nodded. "It must have been terrible. While I would have gladly stood with my comrades, I am happy I do not carry memories of that event with me."

"There she is!" With a leathery slap of his wings, Lorfo, the Toydarian from the spaceport, landed on the edge of their table. "You were the best bargainer at the port, so I have a deal for you."

She shot him a withering glance, but something beyond him caught her eye. Aayla tapped the back of Ylenic's hand. "To your right, fifty degrees. That's him, near the two Gotal."

Ylenic looked and then nodded and breathed deeply. "I have him, and them."

"I have a deal for you, pretty one," Lorfo repeated, chuckling. "Forget them. Their boss would have nothing for you."

Aayla frowned at Lorfo. "Not now." She moved past the Toydarian and started around the ring of tables on the outside. Ylenic mirrored her path on the inside.

The Gotal spotted Tane at the same time as the Jedi and started directly toward him. He saw them and spun, looking for an escape route.

Aayla felt someone grab her right shoulder. She twisted away and, without thinking, flicked her left hand at the Toydarian clinging to her. She gave him only a tiny push with the Force, but that was enough to bounce him back onto their table, splashing their drinks onto a pair of Grans. The two aliens blinked all six of their eyes in surprise and grabbed Lorfo.

Aayla's action had alerted the Gotal. One continued after Tane, while the other drew a blaster and fired a shot at Aayla.

Time slowed for her even as she saw him reach for his weapon. As it slid from a well-worn holster and a thumb snapped the safety off, her right hand had disappeared into her jacket and grasped the silver cylinder of her lightsaber. She had it out and pointed down before he finished aiming at her. When he hit the trigger, she ignited the blue blade and batted the scarlet bolt high, making it pass between two caged dancers.

The music swallowed both the whine of the first bolt and Lorfo's outraged cries, but the light of the second bolt scattered Hornstar's patrons. Aayla had to deflect it high again, for if she missed in trying to direct it back at the shooter, she'd kill dancers or members of the band. The

patrons' panic spread to the dancers, and the band faltered, save for the lone Dorelian Beshniel player tearing off on a riff in counter-point to the whine of blaster bolts.

The bolts not only dispersed the crowd but showed the Gotal's allies the location of their foes. Fully alive in the Force, Aayla felt someone coming at her back. She spun, bringing the sizzling blue blade around and down through a wrist. The hand and the vibroblade it had been holding dropped away, accompanied by a hiss of pain. She clipped her attacker on the head with the blunt end of her lightsaber and slashed right, driving away another bolt.

She spun to follow her cut and dropped into a crouch to scythe the blade through the center post of a table. The gunman who had leaped upon it tipped and tottered, then pitched over. His blaster sprayed an arc of fire toward the ceiling as he went. With a minor thrust in the Force, Aayla pushed him into two others ruffians, spilling the lot of them to the floor.

A Weequay leaped over the tangle of limbs and came at her with a truncheon held low in his right hand. His thumb hit a button, and the end of the weapon sparked as he thrust it at her. Aayla shifted onto her right knee and brought the blade up and over in a cut that sheered the truncheon in half. She ducked her shoulder, catching the Weequay in the stomach, and tossed him up and over in a somersault that toppled another table.

Panic and fear surged through the cantina, and in its wake came a near silence. Patrons and dancers had fled the building or crouched behind whatever cover they could find. Aayla glanced left and saw Ylenic, his cloak off, his green lightsaber gleaming. Around him lay a number of ruffians, all of them radiating enough pain for her to know they were alive and likely to stay that way.

Four humans pushed in against the tide of customers fleeing through the entrance. Three of them, two men and a woman, wore the green-and-black uniforms of CorSec officers. In their wake followed a tall man, quite slender, with black hair and cold gray eyes. He paused halfway down the stairs to take in the whole scene as his people rushed forward, drew their blasters, and leveled them at the Jedi.

Ylenic's blade vanished, and Aayla likewise extinguished hers. One of the CorSec officers put his blaster back in its holster and bent to check the one-handed man who had been wielding the vibroblade. He glanced back at his boss, got a nod, then produced a comlink and called for medical services.

The tall man approached Aayla and waved Ylenic over. "I am Inspector Rostek Horn of the Corellian Security Force. You are Jedi?"

Aayla hesitated for a moment, but before she could answer, Ylenic spoke. "Yes, Inspector, we are Jedi, passing through the system. We inquired at the spaceport where music and food might be had for weary travelers, and we were directed here."

Horn raised an eyebrow. "You are not dressed as Jedi."



Aayla nodded. "Given the neutrality of Corellia, we thought keeping our presence hidden would avoid creating unnecessary tensions."

"Unfortunately, Inspector, it did not." The Caamasi patted Aayla gently on the shoulder. "These individuals hoped my companion would wear something more revealing and dance for them. I was taken as harmless, since I am Caamasi."

Aayla opened her senses to the Force, trying to determine whether Ylenic was using a Jedi technique to influence the inspector's mind. He was not. She did know the ability to manipulate minds depended on the target's strength of will. She suspected, quite strongly, that Inspector Horn would have been close to impossible to influence that way.

More CorSec officers arrived and began to gather the casualties. Horn studied those being hauled away in silence. He nodded. "This crew's caused trouble before. They're not going to tell us anything. There don't seem to be any other witnesses, so your version of events must be the truth."

He looked closely at Aayla. "Unless there's anything else you want to tell me?"

"Not a thing, Inspector."

"Defending yourselves is not a crime, but I'll need to see your identification." He pulled a datapad from his pocket and began entering their information. "Have you communicated with the Jedi here?"

"No, Inspector." Aayla twitched her lekku in the equivalent of a shrug. "We wished to be no bother."

"That's probably best, then, to be no bother. You'll be leaving soon?"

Ylenic nodded. "Very soon, Inspector."

"Good. Don't let me keep you."

Ylenic took Aayla lightly by the elbow, but she gently freed herself and turned back to Horn. "Inspector, if you don't mind, a question?"

"Yes?"

"When you said they were a crew, you didn't mean they were from a starship, did you?"

"No. Small time hoodlums who hire out to whomever's being free with credits."

"And in this case?"

"I don't know who, yet, but I will." He smiled slowly. "You will be long gone by then."

"Of course we will, Inspector." Ylenic bowed gracefully. "A mere memory by then."

The Jedi left the cantina and cut through the crowd gathering around the medical transport. Already they heard stories of wholesale slaughter within the club. Aayla braced to hear the words "Jedi" and "lightsaber" used, but most folks were recounting how they had narrowly been missed in a hail of blaster fire. Their role appeared to have escaped notice in the chaos.

Instead of heading back toward the spaceport, Ylenic walked farther east. His long-legged stride ate up the ground, and Aayla found herself trotting to catch-up. "Where are we going?"

"Away from there. I am seeking, perhaps in vain, a whiff of our quarry. Did you get anything?"

Aayla cast her mind back, sorting through recently perceived sensations, but she found nothing she could attach to Tane. She'd seen him, but she had not sensed him in the Force, and that surprised her. Given his situation, he should have been radiating anxiety with the intensity of a solar flare. "I got nothing."

Ylenic stopped, and his shoulders slumped. "I do not like this."

"Do we assume they have Tane?"

"He was spirited out quickly, or else he escaped and is being trailed. Either way, I think we have to assume he is in unfriendly custody."

"It's my fault this went bad, isn't it?" Aayla frowned. "I used the Force to flick Lorfo away, and that alerted the Gotals."

Ylenic took a deep breath in through his nose and snorted. "For you, the Force and telekinesis come easily, and you use them almost unconsciously. While what you did was a mistake, you were far more circumspect in how you dealt with your assailants. Had CorSec not arrived so quickly, we could have hidden our lightsabers and been away without anyone identifying us as Jedi."

"Except for the Gotals."

"Yes, the key point in it all. This is why time is now of the essence. Before we could lay out bait and wait for Tane to come to us, but now we must find him." Ylenic rested a hand on her shoulder. "Your question of Inspector Horn was good, by the way, and I wish he could have shared useful information with us."

Something tugged at the back of Aayla's mind, but before she could focus on it, the dry flapping of wings and a grating voice drove it from her mind.

"There's the pretty lady. She's a Jedi." Lorfo hung in the air and laughed. "I'm most impressed. She bargained without using her powers."

Aayla smiled as much in apology as in greeting. "Who would want to cheat an honest merchant?"

"If only I was one."

Her pale eyes narrowed. "Lorfo, you knew the Gotals. You know who they are working for."

"Yes, yes. I told you they would be no good for dealing."

"I need to find the Gotals and their boss, Lorfo. Do you know where they are?"

"Well." The little winged creature rubbed a finger over his bulbous nose. "I am a merchant."

"I'll refund you ten percent on our previous deal."

"Twenty."

"Fifteen."

"Done!" His voice rose triumphantly, and he soared into the air. Floating down a bit awkwardly, he grinned and pointed down an alley heading south. "This way, not far, hurry."

**One of the
Gotals snapped
his head in Blue's
direction**

The Jedi raced after the Toydarian. Their course soon turned west again, through rubbish-choked alleys that set Ylenic to sneezing. Aayla assumed the alley's miasma was for him the equivalent of blinding lights to her. Her sympathy for his discomfort only increased as she found the stench so revolting in a few places that she had to pinch shut her nose and breathe through her mouth.

Lorfo led them to a small warehouse with tall, heavy-duty shelving units crammed with duraplast crates. Lights burned deep in the warehouse's heart, and Aayla heard voices inside. She refrained from reaching out with the Force so she would not repeat the mistake she'd made at Homestar.

Turning, she pointed Lorfo back toward the door. "Thank you for your help. You don't want to be here if more trouble happens."

He darted down, kissed her hand, and gave her a wink. Spinning almost elegantly, he fluttered off low to the ground and, as quietly as possible, left the warehouse.

Aayla and Ylenic crept forward, slipping through tight spaces, peering around corners. She dearly wished she could use the Force to get a sense of her surroundings. Ylenic had been correct—sometimes using the Force came so naturally to her that she did so without a second thought. Now, not being able to without alerting any nearby Gotals, she felt blind.

They had crossed three-quarters of the way to the heart of the warehouse when two voices rose in the center of the building.

One was clearly surprised, and the other shouted the first down, then let forth with a great laugh. As the echoes of its laughter died, the voice called out. "You Jedi might as well come in. Things are well outside your control. If you would like to see Ratri Tane live, I suggest you cease skulking about."

Aayla glanced at Ylenic, and he nodded, so they both straightened from crouches behind crates and walked forward. She kept her head up and covered her surprise as those gathered in the middle of the room came into view. She'd wondered how their presence had been betrayed, but the first creature she saw, hovering there, explained everything.

Lorfo shrugged with only a trace of embarrassment. "You should have given me twenty percent."

Beneath the hovering Toydarian stood four individuals. The two Gotals from Homestar pointed their blasters at the Jedi. Between them were Tane and a large, heavy-set man with a florid face, a bright shock of red hair, and freckles so thick they almost masked his eyes as effectively Ylenic's purple fur did his. He held Tane in front of him, with his left arm around Tane's throat and a blaster jammed into his ribs. A twitch of the trigger would broil Tane's heart.

The man smiled, revealing a tumble of teeth that made Lorfo's grin look like a work of art. "My name is Tendir Blue, and I'm actually pleased to see you. The Techno Union and its allies were willing to pay very well for Tane and the things he'd taken, but Count Dooku is exceptionally generous when Jedi are delivered to his keeping."

Aayla estimated the distance between her and the Gotals, knowing she could clear the seven meters in a leap. If she could keep herself from being hit by blaster bolts, she could cut them down and... arrive just in time to watch Tane collapsing with a smoking hole in his chest.

Blue punched his left thumb down on something that had been concealed in his fist. From above and behind Aayla, crates creaked

open as six Trade Federation battle droids unfolded themselves. Their limbs straightened with a clatter, and their blasters oriented on the two Jedi.

The large Corellian smiled even more broadly and stated what Aayla already realized. "As you can see, it is quite impossible for you to do anything. Even if you were to cut down the Gotals, my droids would kill you, and I should certainly have killed Tane by then."

Aayla shook her head. "Kill him, and you don't get the prototype or the files."

Blue laughed and Tane looked crestfallen. "He was so eager to leave here, the silly man had the files and prototype on him. While my clients would love to have him in their possession, they have instructed me that his life is expendable. Will you have his blood on your hands?"

The Jedi remained silent.

The Corellian ground the blaster's barrel hard against Tane's ribs. "Your lightsabers. Slide them over here, slowly or, Tane dies."

Aayla glanced at Ylenic. He shook his head, opened his cloak, and withdrew his lightsaber held lightly between thumb and forefinger.

The Caamasi stooped and slid the weapon to within a meter of the Gotals. Unable to think of an alternative, Aayla did the same.

A Gotal picked up the weapons, and Blue nodded with satisfaction. "Very good. I am glad we can all be civilized about this. Lorfo, you shall be well rewarded..."

Then something odd happened. Aayla could still hear Blue speak, but his mouth moved out of sync with his words. A lightsaber sailed across the warehouse, and she snatched it from the air. As she ignited it and swung the silver blade around to ward off the droid's shots, she sensed Ylenic moving between her and the Gotals, protecting her back.

Then the vision faded. Ylenic still stood at her right. Her hands remained empty, and one of the Gotals snapped his head in Blue's direction. "The Force, they are using it."

The Corellian groaned. "Stupid Jedi." Blue stroked the blaster's trigger. Smoke puffed from Tane's jacket. The man gasped and slumped. Blue let him fall to the floor.

Then almost exactly as it had been in her vision, a lightsaber flew across the room. She did snatch it from the air and ignite it. The battle droids started to focus on her, but she gathered the Force and launched herself into the air. She soared to the level of the highest droid, landed, and batted aside one bolt before she swept the blade through its middle and sent the pieces tumbling to the duracrete floor.

Aayla leaped away as more scarlet bolts chewed into the shelving and blasted other crates to melting shards. She landed in a crouch and cut the legs from beneath one of the droids. She reversed the blade and stabbed it through the chest of a second as she stood up. With a flick of her left hand, she dumped a third droid backward into the crate from which it had emerged.



A bit more of the Force lifted that crate and dropped it, dashing crate and contents on the floor.

Yanking the silver blade free of the pierced droid, Aayla spun and redirected a hail of bolts at the droids who fired them. Three shots hit one on the left side, spinning it about wildly before its legs tangled and it went down smoking. Yet another bolt took the head of the last one clean off. It stood there for a moment, then a gentle Force push dropped it backward, where it lay with limbs splayed and unmoving.

Aayla turned and looked at where the Gotal and Blue had been standing. Both Gotal writhed on the floor, their hands clutching painfully at their horns. Ylenic stood over them with his lightsaber burning brightly.

Blue was also down, his blaster in two pieces on the floor. Tane knelt beside him, his right hand on the man's forehead and his left hand wrapped around the hilt of Aayla's lightsaber.

Aayla thumbed the silver blade off and reversed the hilt. "Your lightsaber? Thank you for the loan." She floated the lightsaber over to Tane, who caught it in his right hand.

The man then stood, extinguished her lightsaber, and extended it toward her. "I would send this to you, but I am afraid it wouldn't get very far."

Aayla crossed to him and retrieved her lightsaber. "Who are you?"

The man held up one finger before bending and scooping up one of the Gotal's blasters. He flicked the selector lever to stun and pumped a blue bolt into each of the horned ruffians. Their bodies bowed spasmodically and relaxed.

Ylenic rested his left hand on Tane's shoulder. "This is Jedi Master Nejaa Halcyon."

"What?" Aayla bowed her head. "I am honored, Master."

"I'm the one who is honored. You're a hero of Geonosis."

"I was there. Others were heroes." She looked at him and at Ylenic. "I couldn't get a sense of him in the Force because he was shielding his thoughts."

The Caamasi nodded. "He had to, or else the Gotal would have spotted him as a substitute."

She frowned and her lekku shivered. "We were sent here on a mission to get Tane and not involve the Jedi guardians of Corellia. I don't understand. Was I included because Master Windu suspected I would be out of control enough to alert the Gotal? Clearly you wanted Blue to think Jedi were after you, so he'd believe you were the genuine article. I was chosen not for my skill, but for my lack of experience."

Nejaa shook his head. "Actually, Aayla Secura, you are here because Master Windu thought you best for the job."

She snorted. "Anyone could have done what I have done."

"I would disagree." Halcyon clasped his hands together at his waist. "What we have accomplished here was rather complex."

"And, so far, done very well."

Aayla spun at the new voice and saw Rostek Horn entering the

warehouse. "You knew about this place and this scheme?" She looked back over her shoulder at Ylenic. "And you are part of this conspiracy, too?"

"Don't forget me, pretty Jedi." Lorfo flapped down from the rafters. "I played a key role."

Aayla sighed and sat on a crate. "I didn't think gullibility was a trait for which Jedi were valued."

"That is not why you were chosen." Nejaa pointed at the wreckage of the droids. "Your combat skills were vital. Moreover, you are known as a hero of Geonosis. The Separatists watch for the Jedi it knows about, and Geonosis survivors come high on their list. Lorfo was able to spot you, to draw attention to you at Homestar. That's why Blue's people were close to you when the shooting started—which it would have done regardless of how you reacted, to keep you occupied while they got me. I had on me a small tracking device, but it failed to work. Had you used it to find me, Lorfo would have betrayed you to Blue as he did, but without guiding you here first. When Ylenic discovered he could not track me with the locator, Lorfo flew up to lead you."

She shook her head. "So, Lorfo keeps them looking at us, so they won't realize you're not really Tane. We were the misdirection."

Ylenic smiled. "More correctly, we all are misdirection. You and I, here, for Blue, yes; but this whole operation as well."

Aayla's lekku twitched and she nodded. "While the Confederacy is looking here for Tane, he's already off being relocated. And that would mean the files and prototype are flawed."

"They are," Nejaa nodded solemnly.

"Not hopelessly, though, just a hasty attempt at sabotage. Techno Union scientists will repair the damage, but Tane is willing to prepare counter-measure products that will render the new droids less than effective. The entire Separatists' effort to retool factories and produce a new generation of battle droids will be futile."

He pointed to the robotic carnage Aayla had left behind. "Those droids and the fact that Dooku is paying for captured Jedi likely will not be enough to sway the Corellian government to throw in with the Galactic Republic. On the other hand, they should be enough to show the other Jedi in this system that the evil of the Clone Wars is at hand. I hope it will free us to act with the rest of the Jedi."

Aayla pointed at Halcyon's jacket. "Blue shot you at point blank range. Why aren't you dead?"

Halcyon shrugged. "The Halcyons are weak when it comes to telekinesis. We are good at broadcasting visions, however. Hence, you saw my message. We also have a rare ability. With preparation, we can absorb a fair amount of energy. We have to bleed it off somehow, so I used it to send my lightsaber to you—as I could not normally have done."

As he finished speaking, he held up his left forearm and slipped

**She dragged
her left foot,
and he could hear
her rasping
breath.**

the lightsaber into the sheath hidden there. "Tearing yours away from the Gotal would have been a bit much for me to do and get a blade to you quickly."

The Twi'lek looked over at Ylenic. "What did you do to the Gotal?" He smiled. "You'll recall the alley stench was overwhelming?" "Yes."

"The Gotal pick up on things like the Force through their horns. I simply used the Force to hit them with its version of the stench." Aayla winced. "Neat trick."

Ylenic's smile broadened.

"So, how much of all this did Master Windu know? I caught no deception from him."

The Caamas opened his hands. "Nejaa is an old friend. When Tane reached Corellia and this plan began to form, Nejaa asked me to act as a liaison between him and the Jedi Council. The Jedi getting Tane and his family to safety are not from Corellia. They are acting under Master Windu's orders."

Nejaa nodded. "Of internal Corellian Jedi politics, he knows about as much as anyone does on Coruscant."

Inspector Horn smirked. "That's likely as much as anyone here knows about it, too."

Nejaa shook his head, and Aayla sensed a strong bond of friendship between the two men. "Nothing could send us over to the Confederacy, so the chance of finding something to win us over to the Republic's fight was one worth taking. You were not told everything, so your reactions would be natural and read true to anyone watching."

"I don't like it, but I understand. There is something else I need to know, however." Aayla thought for a moment and narrowed her eyes. "Your intention is to implant a memory in Blue that he will carry off to his masters, and that will verify that the data and prototype are the real thing?"

"That's the plan."

"That may be the plan, Master Halcyon, but I am willing to bet that Count Dooku will sift through his mind, and things will unravel from there."

Ylenic canted his head to the side. "Her point is a good one."

Nejaa nodded. "Agreed, but I'm not sure I see a good fix."

"Don't worry." Aayla boosted herself off the crate. "I know just what will do the job."



Tendir Blue drifted back to consciousness as Lorfo tugged on his left arm. The man had slumped against the wall in a passageway in the spaceport. The Toydarian's breath came heavy and sour, his words rushed and full of panic.

"Get going. Now! She's still coming after you!"

Blue shook his head to clear it. He raised a hand to his forehead, where fingertips brushed over the wound from a glancing blaster bolt. What happened? "Who's coming, Lorfo?"

"The Jedi!" The winged creature's eyes grew wide. "The Jedi you didn't kill."

Tendir scrambled to his feet and patted his pockets. He had datacards and the prototype of the chip. Those things he remembered. He added to that the memory of shooting Tane. After that, blackness, nothing—must be amnesia from the bolt.

He looked around and recognized his surroundings. "This way, to my ship."

"I know. I called and it's pre-flighted." The Toydarian fluttered in front of him. "You owe me."

"Yes, yes, you'll be paid."

"Paid, no. Get me off this rock."

Pain throbbed through the man's head. "What happened?"

"Everything. There was shooting and lightsabers—and the gold Jedi, he died. Your Gotal, your droids, gone. She is hurt, but you stumbled out. I helped." The Toydarian's voice rose to a shriek. "There she is!"

Blue took one glance behind him. He saw her in the tunnel, illuminated by the azure light of her lightsaber. She dragged her left foot, and he could hear her rasping breath. She slumped against the wall but pointed her lightsaber at him.

"You won't escape me, Tendir Blue!"

She gestured with her left hand and Lorfo squealed. His fingers clawed at the shoulder of Blue's coat, and the man could feel the Jedi tugging at the little Toydarian with the Force. He tried to keep going, but Lorfo's grasp kept him anchored to the spot.

"Help me, Blue!"

"If it's you she wants..." The man smashed a fist down on Lorfo's hands. "She can have you."

Another blow broke his grip, and the Toydarian flew back to slam into the Jedi. Both of them went down in a tumble, and Tendir sprinted forward. He cut through the crowd, knocking people left and right as he ran to his ship. Once inside, he sealed the airlock and lifted off. As he urged his ship forward, he saw the Twi'lek Jedi enter the hangar bay. She gestured at him, and he slewed the ship around, letting his turbine exhaust knock her back into the tunnel.

With a laugh, Tendir Blue pointed his ship to the stars.

Ylenic helped Aayla up. "You are unhurt?"

"My pride is wounded," she said, "but I'll live." She brushed her backside off and used the Force to call her lightsaber to hand and tucked the weapon inside her jacket again. "I think he believes you're dead and that he just barely escaped. Dooku can sift his mind all he wants. Amnesia explains the lack of memory of the fight, and his fear will confirm the 'truth' of what he says happened here."

Nejaa and Inspector Horn came up, with Lorfo hovering behind them. The Corellian Jedi nodded. "And he thinks Lorfo was apprehended by you, so he will not suspect he was really working for us all along. A neat and tidy package."

"As it should be, Master." Aayla smiled.

"After all, tying things up that way must be why I was put in charge of this mission, don't you think?"



Who's Who: Imperial Grand Admirals

by Daniel Wallace & Abel Peña

Illustration by Joe Corroney



During an elaborate New Year's Fete week ceremony two years before the Battle of Yavin, Emperor Palpatine elevated twelve of his top servants to the lofty station of grand admiral. The rank hadn't existed until that day, and the Emperor inaugurated the office by decreeing that only twelve officers could hold the title at one time.

As the philosophers say, there's a fine line between genius and madness. After the Battle of Endor, the grand admirals foolishly tore themselves apart instead of

banding together against their common enemies in the New Republic. Within two years, the grand admirals were no more—or so it seemed.

The 1991 novel *Heir to the Empire* introduced the concept of the grand admirals into the *Star Wars* Expanded Universe. The most famous of these white-uniformed officers is Grand Admiral Thrawn, star of novels, computer games, and trading cards—and even immortalized as a Hasbro action figure. The following is a dossier on every grand admiral in Palpatine's "Circle of Twelve."



Grand Admiral Thrawn

Who's Who: Imperial Grand

Thrawn

The thirteenth grand admiral in a roster of twelve, Grand Admiral Thrawn earned his title when he took the place of the traitorous Grand Admiral Zaarin. However, his disappearance into the Unknown Regions just before the disastrous Battle of Endor meant that the New Republic had no dossier on Thrawn, mistakenly believing that their conversion of Grand Admiral Grant had closed the book on the Emperor's grand admiralty.

Thrawn is one of the most popular Expanded Universe villains, and his debut in Timothy Zahn's *Heir to the Empire* (the first book in what is commonly referred to as the Thrawn Trilogy) brought back old-school gentleman villains and introduced the concept of the twelve grand admirals into the Expanded Universe. Thrawn's biography has deepened over the years and appears in summary in the *New Essential Guide to Characters*.

Known to his fellow Chiss as Syndic Mitth'raw'nuruodo, Thrawn helmed the Chiss Expansionary Defense Fleet and destroyed the Republic's expeditionary Outbound Flight Project when it treaded on Chiss turf in the Unknown Regions. For his actions, Thrawn was exiled to a jungle planet where agents of the Empire found him and brought him back for military training.

After the Battle of Hoth, Palpatine ordered Thrawn to kill the rogue Grand Admiral Zaarin. Thrawn's rank of grand admiral was made official at this time, and he became a member of the Circle of Twelve. Five years after Endor he re-emerged and brought the New Republic to its knees, but he perished in the effort. Ten years afterward, Thrawn's legacy survived in the form of a Thrawn impostor and an elaborate cloning scheme.

Batch

The "invisible admiral" earned his nickname because of his apparent allergy to Imperial Court politics, but Martio Batch's low profile allowed him to work on a project that was invisible in the literal sense—a fool-proof cloaking device.

Batch spent years aboard the Imdaar Alpha research station fretting over his impossible situation. Cloaking devices had once been common, operating on stygium crystals taken from Aeten II in the Dreighton Nebula. When the Aeten II mines ran dry, however, cloaking devices became a thing of the past.



Grand Admiral Batch



Grand Admiral Declann



Grand Admiral Grant

Batch developed an experimental hybridium cloak, but it suffered from the fatal flaw of "double blindness," meaning the pilot of the cloaked ship couldn't see out. Success came when Batch diverted the Empire's new Tarkin superweapon to Aeten II, where it shattered the planet like a crystal paperweight. With thousands of free-floating crystals at his disposal, Batch easily recreated the classic stygian screen and requisitioned the Super Star Destroyer *Terror* (under the command of Admiral Sarn) to protect his investment. Batch's invisible phantom TIE fighters seemed promising, but Rebel saboteurs destroyed everything, including the *Terror*.

Batch survived, but knew he had failed on an epic scale. He took his ships and hid in the Outer Rim for months. Batch's crew—still loyal to the late Admiral Sarn—assassinated him and joined Warlord Harsk's new splinter kingdom in the Deep Core.

Declann

In retrospect, it isn't surprising that one of Palpatine's grand admirals was a Force-user. Alternately morose and threatening, Nial Declann was as famous for his mood swings as for his ability to telepathically meld the units under his command into a superior fighting force.

During the Clone Wars, Declann battled secessionists aboard a Republic assault ship. Later, his uncanny success as a TIE pilot earned him the attention of Palpatine's agents, who left Declann with troubling questions: Why had the Jedi not found him at birth? Why should his talent stagnate just because the Jedi were no more?

Declann trained in the ways of the dark side on the ancient Sith world of Dromund Kaas. Palpatine allowed his newest adept to return to his fleet, but only after a graduation exercise in which Declann used the Force to kill a captured Rebel.

Declann was one of four grand admirals, along with Takel, Makati, and Teshik, who were stationed aboard the second Death Star during the Battle of Endor. Unlike the others, however, he didn't make it off the station before its destruction. When he felt the Emperor's death through the Force, Declann abandoned his efforts to coordinate the Imperial fleet and raced to the throne room. He was en route when the station exploded.

Admirals

Grant

Grand Admiral Grant stood aloof, and his peers predicted he would be the first to perish in the post-Endor bloodbath. In the end, he outlived them all, earning the appellation "the last grand admiral."

As a Tapani noble, Grant harbored an aristocrat's disdain for what he called the "working classes"—chiefly aliens and droids. Though he won a score of victories against the Rebel Alliance, Grant didn't curry favor with moffs. When the Battle of Endor turned the galaxy upside-down, he was therefore the only grand admiral with no power base.

Grant sought sanctuary in the Imperial breakaway kingdom known as the Pentastar Alignment and watched the other grand admirals destroy each other. Two years after Endor, Grant defected to the New Republic, agreeing to give up Imperial military secrets in exchange for prosecutorial immunity.

In comfortable retirement on the beaches of Rathalay, the "last grand admiral" watched with interest as Grand Admiral Thrawn returned to menace the galaxy. He could crush that usurping alien, Grant thought to himself. But no one ever called.

Grunger

Introduced in the young adult novel *The Glove of Darth Vader*, Josef Grunger wasn't known for subtlety or loyalty. While Grand Admiral Tarkin was away on the second Death Star, Grunger was busy helping Tarkin's first officer patrol the spice world of Gargon in the Mandalore sector due to increasing reports of "albino-skinned marauders." When Grunger received word of the Emperor's death, he immediately fired on and disabled his ally's ship.

Grunger used his rank to bully other Imperials throughout the Outer Rim, absorbing their ships into his fleet. Within a year, the grand admiral built up an immense armada of 30 Imperial-class and Victory-class Star Destroyers, 60 Strike cruisers, 100 Carrack light cruisers, various miscellaneous vessels, and the Super Star Destroyer *Aggressor*.

After Teshik's execution, Grunger swaggared into the Corellian sector to launch a strike at Imperial Center. But Grand Admiral Patta had already claimed Corellian space for himself. Through the ingenious use of a torpedo sphere, Patta decimated Grunger's armada, but Grunger refused to back down.



Grand Admiral Grunger



Grand Admiral Il-Raz



Grand Admiral Makati

Grunger's pride drove him to ram the *Aggressor* into the heart of Patta's torpedo sphere.

Il-Raz

Who was the best and the brightest grand admiral? Certainly not Ishin-Il-Raz, who was considered an idiotic zealot by his peers, seemingly appointed for no reason other than his faithfulness to the New Order.

Il-Raz was the grand admiral to whom critics always pointed when grumbling about Palpatine's officer promotions. Lacking any military experience, he helped found the Committee for the Preservation of the New Order (COMPNO) and its core precepts—institutionalized discrimination and rule by dictatorship. Palpatine's inclusion of Il-Raz in his Circle of Twelve was obviously a political appointment, and Il-Raz knew it. From the bridge of the Star Destroyer *Emperor's Disciple*, he executed missions that he hoped would earn him favor in Palpatine's eyes, including the Massacre of Myomar and the bombardment of Shalam.

When Emperor Palpatine died aboard the second Death Star, Il-Raz became convinced that his career had vaporized along with the battle station. Eight months after Endor, while muttering the Select Committee's precepts like a mantra, he plunged the *Emperor's Disciple* into the firestorm of the Denarii Nova, taking 37,000 lives in addition to his own.

Makati

Mentioned in a throwaway line in the Timothy Zahn novel *Vision of the Future*, Afsheen Makati is one of two grand admirals named by Zahn (the other being Thrawn). Makati's life was consumed by hatred for Supreme Prophet Kadann, whom he first encountered when a shadowy Imperial group called "The Secret Order" led the grand admiral to a Rebel base on Thila. Kadann overheard Makati's first officer mock the glittering regalia of the Order's members, prompting the diminutive darksider to lash out at Makati with Force-lightning and the advice, "Learn to reign in your subordinates, dear Admiral."

After the Battle of Endor, Makati remained loyal to whomever ruled Coruscant's Imperial City. When Kadann claimed the throne, however, Makati requested permission from Ysanne Isard to hunt down the usurper. Makati delved into Imperial Intelligence's files and located Kadann's embittered pupil Azrakel.

Who's Who: Imperial Grand

During the Trioculus affair, Kadann became trapped in the Lost City of the Jedi. He escaped with the help of his slave Triclops. However, it was too late. Isard had reinstated galactic freedom of religion, causing the spiritually starved citizens to abandon the necromantic faith of the Prophets. Kadann also found the corpses of his fellow prophets littering their space stronghold Scardia. While Kadann was aboard, Makati's voice erupted from the comm: "Your 'subordinate' Azrakel was kind enough to help me find you, my Emperor. He doesn't care for your sparkly dress either." Kadann's reign ended in a torrent of turbolaser fire.

Makati met his own fate soon after.

Pitta

A rabid anti-alien bigot, Danetta Pitta saw no irony in the fact that he wasn't entirely human himself. Pitta could trace his family bloodline back to several near-human ancestors, including a Borneck and an Etti, and covered up his secret by becoming a zealous defender of Human High Culture and scrutinizing everyone else's pedigrees. Even COMPNOR officials disliked him.

His prejudices dovetailed neatly with the Emperor's plans for expansion. Pitta's three Imperial dungeon ships—the *Apocahk*, the *Angrix*, and the *Azgoghk*—roared through the Outer Rim, depopulating alien homeworlds and dooming their inhabitants to slavery or vivisection.

After the Battle of Endor, Pitta used his wealth to bribe the Corellian diktat and become the unofficial protector of the Corellian Sector. He took command of a massive torpedo sphere but was forced to defend his new holdings against the gluttonous Grand Admiral Grunger. In the Battle of Tralus, the losing Grunger chose to play the spoilsport. He rammed his flagship into Pitta's torpedo sphere, killing both combatants.

Syn

Peccati Syn's fondest memories were of childhood, when his parents told him about the glories of the afterlife promised to followers of the Sacred Way. Then the Empire came and all but abolished religion. To fill the spiritual void, a young Syn internalized the Emperor's doctrine for a New Order and eventually rose to the position of grand admiral.



Grand Admiral Pibba



Grand Admiral Syn



Grand Admiral Takel

Syn rooted out the Rebel menace dutifully and skillfully in his ship *Fi*—High Galactic for "son." After the Battle of Endor, however, Syn's Imperial religion crumbled. He found new hope in the unabashedly named Church of the Dark Side—a religion headed by "The Prophets" and sanctioned by Sate Pestage. The Prophets preached ultimate Imperial victory and the resurrection of Emperor Palpatine, filling a tremendous vacuum in Imperial spirituality and morale. A rejuvenated Syn even loaned his copy of the sacred book *Secrets of the Dark Side* to his maniacally depressed peer Il-Raz.

While officially he supported Pestage's regime, Syn's devotion was to the Prophets. Syn operated around Kashyyyk, where the Prophetess Merilli served as his personal spiritual guide. When Admiral Ackbar came with overwhelming force to liberate Kashyyyk, Syn fought detached from worldly concern for his crew, having promised himself never to abandon his beliefs again. During the battle, Syn and his ship were vaporized.

Takel

Miltin Takel was infamous for his flamboyancy and street-wise dialect. He loved "hanging out" with the Empire's social elite, collecting and spreading unsavory rumors. His own vices, however, were equally well known: spice and women, preferably in tandem. Only those courtiers closest to the grand admiral knew the true extent of his passions, however, for he lusted not only for the other gender but also for other species altogether. Takel indulged his cravings under the protection of his brother, the governor of Esseles.

Despite his obsessions, Takel was an incredible strategist, as proven in the Siege of Trasemene, thanks in part to the glitterstim in his gundark-hide bag. Indeed, it was thanks to a dose of glitterstim that Takel picked up on the anxiety of his peer Declann and escaped the second Death Star's destruction.

Grand Admiral Grunger bullied Takel out of control of the spice world of Gargon, and Ysanne Isard threatened to kill Takel for his inability to recapture the region. Takel fled to the grand moff convocation on Kessel. When a spiced-up Takel saw the moffs' chosen successor to Palpatine—the handsome three-eyed Trioculus—he felt a strange connection with the alien. Moreover, the trioptic ruler promised to "deal" with Grunger.

Admirals

Unfortunately, when Teshik's spice-induced paranoia caused him to question Trioculus' tactics once too often, the warlord ordered his execution.

Teshik

Another grand admiral introduced by West End Games' *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*, Osvald Teshik was a cyborg. Compassionate and confident, Teshik took seriously his duty to keep the Core Worlds safe. When Teshik failed to deal with a Rebel pirate in a timely fashion, however, Emperor Palpatine used Teshik as an example to the other grand admirals. Palpatine sent Teshik on a doomed mission against the Hapan war fleet. Against all odds, Teshik survived—at least, parts of him did. Three-fourths of Teshik's body was replaced by cybernetics, exposing him to merciless discrimination. Subsequently, the grand admiral completely severed himself from his emotions.

As the second Death Star crumbled around him, Teshik was pinned by a durasteel column. None of the fleeing Imperials was willing to help a 'borg—except one. A construction worker got Teshik free and to his command ship.

Teshik felt some emotion awaken within his metallic innards. When the Imperial retreat was called, Teshik stayed behind. As a testament to Teshik's brilliance, the battle raged for another three hours before his Star Destroyer *Eleemosynary* succumbed to overwhelming ion cannon fire.

Soon after, the New Republic executed Teshik for "inhuman atrocities committed against the citizens of the galaxy." Teshik responded to the accusation with metallic laughter.

Tigellinus

Rufaan Tigellinus first appeared in West End Games' *Star Wars Adventure Journal*, in a recurring section called "Galaxywide News-Nets" similar to the faux HoloNet News at www.holonetnews.com.

Grand Admiral Tigellinus' savvy and charisma knew no opposition in the Imperial Court, and he soon found himself among such powerhouses as Moff Disra and advisor Alec Pradeux. Then came Thrawn. A human elitist, Tigellinus befriended Thrawn with the intention of betraying him. Within a year, Thrawn was unwelcome not only in the



Grand Admiral Teshik



Grand Admiral Tigellinus



Grand Admiral Zaarin

Imperial Court but in all the Empire.

After Thrawn's exile, Tigellinus felt his fate lay elsewhere—ruling regions instead of protecting them. Steadily, the grand admiral used his influence to transition to grand moff. Among the grand moffs, he butted heads with the alien Moff Hissa. Despite their rivalry, it was with Moff Disra's help that Tigellinus soon dominated the massive Imperial Core Systems.

In the aftermath of Endor, several moffs banded together and formed the Central Committee, with Hissa at its head. Tigellinus' influence made him a logical choice for recruitment. Hissa presented Tigellinus with a demeaning offer, knowing Tigellinus would have to accept to survive. On the advice of his trusted friend Disra, however, Tigellinus refused. The irate Committee rallied its forces and took what Tigellinus refused to give—including his life. The newest member of the Committee, Moff Disra, happily took over Tigellinus' assets.

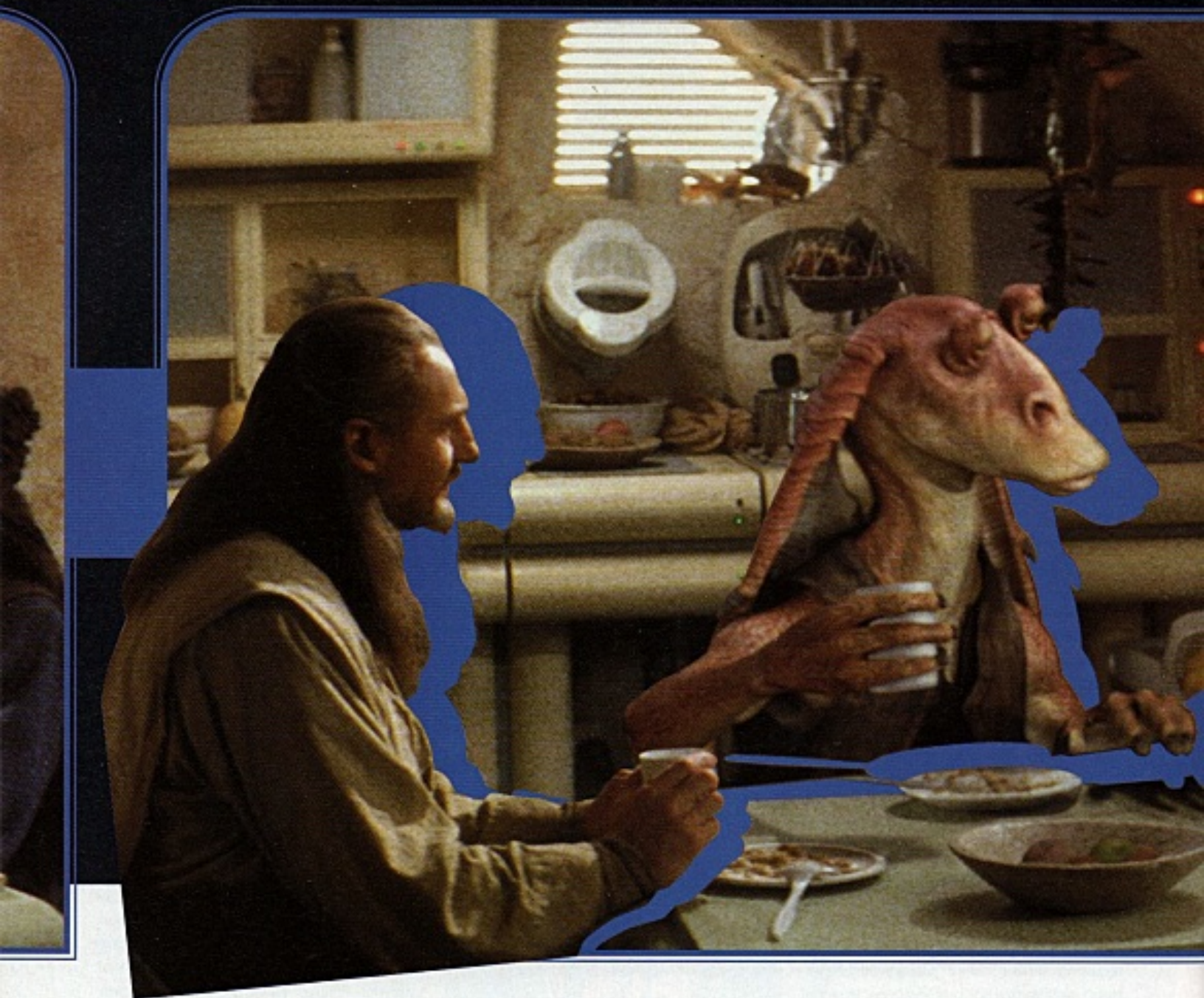
Zaarin

Emperor Zaarin? The idea isn't as ludicrous as it sounds. Demetrius Zaarin gambled everything on an audacious coup d'état and nearly killed the most powerful Sith Lord the galaxy has ever known.

Grand Admiral Zaarin's tale was laid bare in TIE Fighter, LucasArts' 1994 space combat simulator. A genius at research and design, Zaarin created Imperial super-fighters, including the TIE defender. A traitor at heart, he knew he had to strike fast with his innovations before Grand Admiral Batch's cloaking devices gave Palpatine an insurmountable technological edge.

After the Battle of Hoth, Zaarin's agent on Coruscant—a spiteful Emperor's Hand named Arden Lyn—used her powers to abduct the Emperor. Zaarin would have killed Palpatine and installed himself as a military dictator had it not been for the arrival of loyal Imperial forces. Now a fugitive, Zaarin escaped to the Outer Rim with his fleet, staying one step ahead of Grand Admiral Thrawn. Although Zaarin managed to steal the cloak-equipped corvette *Vorknkx*, Thrawn had purposely made the cloak incapable of operating in hyperspace. The *Vorknkx* exploded when it engaged its hyperdrive, reducing Grand Admiral Zaarin to atoms. ☹

What You



The Invisible Effects of

by Ron Magid

Don't See



The Phantom Menace

W

hile *Star Wars* fans eagerly await each new installment to see thrilling battles, out-of-this-world chases, and amazing lightsaber duels, much of which is created via Industrial Light & Magic and remains legend. There's a good argument to be made that the most impressive effects are the ones not even the most keen-eyed viewers can detect.

What You Don't See

In the years between *Return of the Jedi* and *The Phantom Menace*, George Lucas directed his companies to devote their energies to advancing the state of the art of computer-generated effects and digital cinematography. Lucas, who began his career as an editor, was biding his time, waiting to see if he could indeed create a film much more in the editing room and transform filmmaking from what was essentially a production process into a post-production medium. With Episode I, Lucas and his editors, Paul Martin Smith and Ben Burtt, seized the opportunity to redefine filmmaking as we know it—with a little help from ILM.

Patching Things Up

Smith, a veteran of countless commercials, first began working with Lucas on the *Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* television series, which laid the "experimental groundwork for a lot of the stuff we did on Episode I, especially the patching type of tricks, which really progressed on this film," he explains. "And once we found we could do that easily enough, we sort of started doing it more and more!"

Those "patching tricks" included splitting actors out of different takes of the same scene and recombining them in new shots to achieve the optimum performance from each character, adding or removing lip movement to accommodate a revised script, adding characters to scenes where they weren't originally scripted to appear, and so on. This complex recombining of individual elements started almost immediately after a scene was shot. The film was digitized, then the data was transferred to the Avid, a computer editing system, where bits and pieces of actors and settings from many different shots (called elements) were assembled. This is in addition to editing the film itself. "As we were putting the film together, we massaged the elements, so it was all part of the cut," Smith explains. "We had shots where we combined four different takes to create one scene. We call it 3-D editing now."

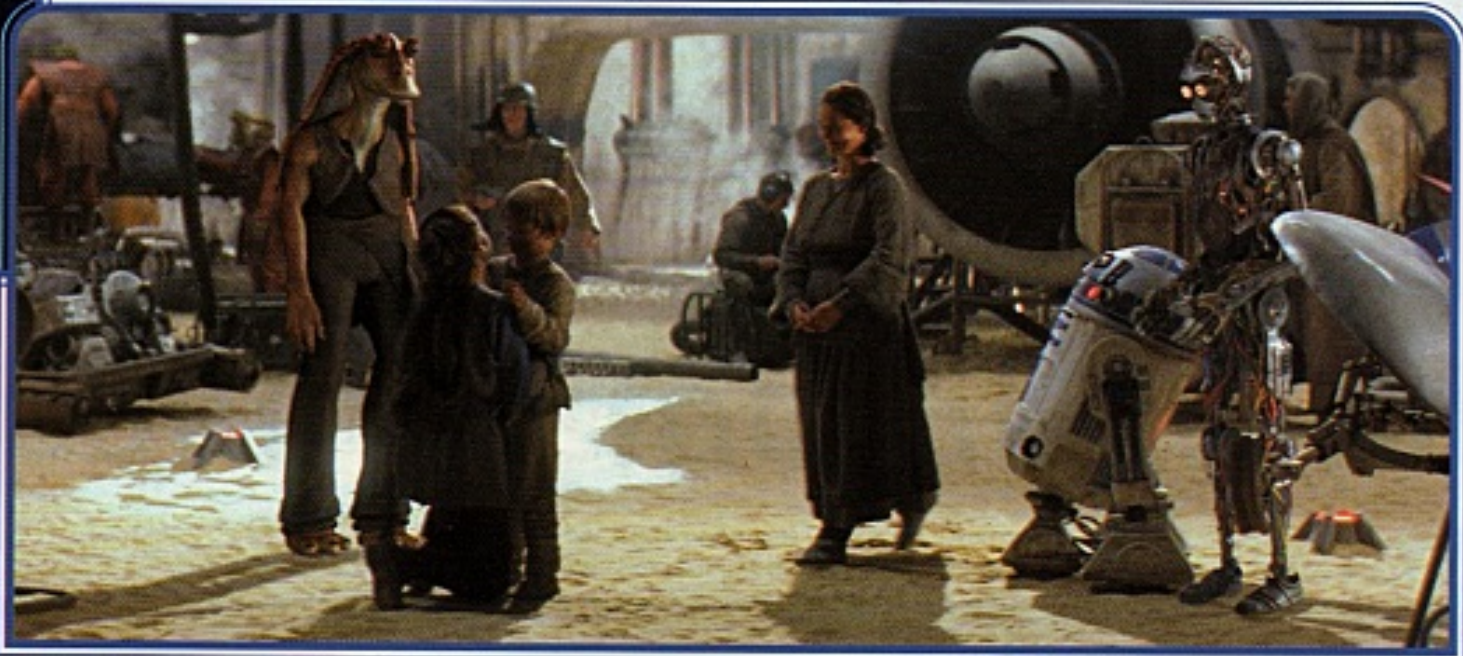
Once the first leg of the production was finished shooting in Europe and Tunisia, Lucas and Smith started the intensive editing of Episode I at Skywalker Ranch in Northern California, while the heavy effects work was being handled only a few miles away at ILM. Smith worked closely with several ILM artists, called compositors, who used the

rough assemblage of elements on the Avid as guidelines for building their digital effects shots. "Martin and George would come up with the shots they wanted, and we'd have to pull everything together," recalls compositor Tim Alexander, who worked on visual effects supervisor John Knoll's unit, assembling some 1,100 shots in the Podrace, space battle, and other sequences, plus a few hundred invisible effects shots. "They'd have two characters in a shot together, but George wanted the best take from each actor, so we'd have the person on the left from one take and the person on the right from another take, and



split them together to form one final take. The first takes we split were quite a few shots in Watto's shop when Anakin meets Padmé and asks her, 'Are you an angel?'"

This form of editing was especially helpful when dealing with the large number of child actors in the film, as with the shot of Anakin's friends running in to see his Podracer. "When you're dealing with five kids in a shot and they're not necessarily doing everything at the right time, we could just force the issue in the editing room," Smith says. "George would say, 'I didn't like the way I blocked this originally,' so we re-blocked the scene. We needed a top angle of the kids running into the shot, but in the section we wanted to use, they were really just standing around. So I actually used a section of one of the kids run-



"The more complicated the shot George would suggest, the more we went, 'Yes! Let's try it!'"

—Paul Martin Smith,
Episode I Visual Effects Editor



ning in to give it motion, blew it up, [and] removed Padmé, who was not necessary to the shot. We also invented shots that were never intended, like the wide shot of R2-D2 and C-3PO walking away. We made that out of four different shots."

Shots where Lucas wanted Anakin to turn his head toward R2-D2 and C-3PO at a different time, or where Shmi was looking at Anakin when he now wanted her looking at her Jedi guests across the dinner table were suddenly fixable. "We needed Shmi to turn the other way," Alexander says, "so we actually 'sliced' her head off and then reverse-printed it in a few shots!"

Not everything that appeared to work on the Avid's small monitor translated quite so easily to the silver screen. "Martin Smith would slice-and-dice mock-up shots on the Avid, then ILM's Editorial Department would break down the elements, and we'd actually do the shots," says Visual Effects Supervisor Scott Squires. "For example, we had a shot where Queen Amidala is with some people and R2-D2. We wanted one guy to look over at R2 a little later, and we had to split that part out so he turns his head ten frames later. Now, obviously, when you're looking at the Avid image, the quality level and detail isn't there, so it seemed like a neat scene. Lots of times we'd find problems later on, when we were actually working on the shot," explains Squires. "Like the Queen's reflection is here on R2 but should be over there, so we'd have to split those elements on R2's head, and then shadows would cross, and that shouldn't be happening. It's all the little things that took the time. We had a great crew, which made this stuff fairly straightforward and just kind of par for the course."

Because the plates that would later feature animated characters were shot empty with the voice actors standing off-camera, Lucas would often have Smith put a version of the character into the empty plate just to get a feeling for what the final shot would look like. "I would actually take footage of Ahmed Best in his Jar Jar costume and put him where we wanted him, or float a maquette of Watto in the shot, which was quite funny," Smith says. "If George wanted Jar Jar's head staring at Qui-Gon or whatever, I'd find a head turn, do a freeze-frame so it kept its direction, and that way [animation director] Rob Coleman would know exactly where the eye lines should be. We wanted to get the animation sequences as close to done as possible, so that Rob's team could get working on those."

Evolutionary Needs

Since Episode I was constantly evolving throughout the editing process, ILM was occasionally asked to create shots Lucas hadn't realized he'd need. "So they'd grab pieces from all over the place that they

hadn't intended to be in that shot, then kind of mock it up on the Avid," Alexander says. "Then we would stick it all together into a shot for them and try to make that look great."

One difficult example involved the scene inside the Podracer hangar after Anakin has won, where Jar Jar picks up the boy, Shmi embraces him, then his friends and Padmé congratulate him. This sequence involved about five shots that were entirely pieced together from found elements. "They added that sequence about two-thirds of the way into the schedule," Alexander notes. "John Knoll reshot the hangar miniature for one side of the frame, then there's a whole live-action plate that fills the right side, and a few CG elements like Jar Jar, along with live-action elements, including Padmé, Shmi, Qui-Gon and



C-3PO, who were shot against a bluescreen. Originally, those bluescreen elements weren't for this exact shot, but George knew that at the end of the race he wanted to do a little celebration. As the story came together, he decided he specifically needed this shot. Qui-Gon was in those bluescreen shots, but he's also up in Watto's box! Since we needed the Padmé element, we actually had to remove Qui-Gon from those bluescreen shots."

Despite the often difficult work, Smith was often carried away by the sheer joy of being able to help create exactly the sequences Lucas envisioned. "The more complicated the shot George would suggest, the more we went, 'Yes! Let's try it!'" Smith says. "Everybody was quite keen to see if we could do it, even though there were times when all of us—ILM, the whole kit-and-caboodle—wondered whether we'd be making it out at the other end of this on time. Because we were literally cutting the movie until the week before the end of the final [sound] mix." 🎧



STAR WARS

at the
Movies

It's a pervasive feeling among Star Wars fans: There was a three-year gap between the release of each original film and a 16-year hiatus between Episodes VI and I. Those were long, dry spells during which no new *Star Wars* material was to be found on the silver screen and very little on television. The *Star Wars Holiday Special* (1978) and the *Star Wars Trilogy Special Edition* (1997) showed up and somewhat narrowed that gap, albeit without bridging it. And then there were two Ewok movies and the animated Ewoks and Droids shows. But was there really much of a gap to begin with? The truth, it turns out, depends greatly on your point of view. Even between movies, *Star Wars* was appearing everywhere, only in slightly altered forms.

One had to look, and sometimes look hard. What you would have discovered, of course, were the various *Star Wars* references sprinkled throughout American cinema since the release of the saga's first movie back in 1977. Because it influenced so many aspects of filmmaking, *Star Wars* infiltrated the movie mindset of the late 1970s and left a permanent mark. The beloved story of a group of Rebels waging an impossible war against the evil Galactic Empire quickly became a common frame of reference. Anyone could casually refer to *Star Wars* and be sure that practically everybody else would understand. Conversations became riddled with quotes and oblique allusions, books and magazines spilled forth their share of *Star Wars* references, and many a TV show winked in the direction of the popular movie saga. Still, the highest honor for this beloved saga will always be a nod from another feature film.

by **Francis K. Lalumière**





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STAR WARS at the Movies



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**"I am
your father's
brother's nephew's
cousin's former
roommate."**

—Dark Helmet (Rick Moranis) to Lone Starr (Bill Pullman),
Spaceballs: The Movie

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Star Wars references can be divided into four general categories: full-fledged **spoofs**, subtler **nudges**, frank **finger pointings**, and well-camouflaged **Easter eggs**. All four categories are permeable, and many references could lead perfectly happy lives in more than one slot. There are a host of exceptions, but we'll stick with this four-part system for clarity's sake. And while there's plenty of *Star Wars* material in other pop culture refuges (especially on TV), we'll stick to feature-length films.

Spoofs

A spoof or parody is the most ostentatious form of *Star Wars* reference. It's the exhibitionist of the family; you just can't miss it. It's also funny, borrowing *Star Wars* elements and displays them in an unusual or unexpected manner.

The mother of all *Star Wars* spoofs is Mel Brook's *Spaceballs* (1987). From the opening sequence ("We brake for nobody") through to the conclusion ("May the Schwartz be with you!"), *Spaceballs* spills out a shipload of characters and situations "borrowed" from all three installments of the original movie trilogy. Darth Vader is Dark Helmet (Rick Moranis), Princess Leia turns into Vespa (Daphne Zuniga), Han Solo (and Luke Skywalker, to a lesser degree) becomes Lone Starr (Bill Pullman), and so on. The movie features a Schwartz duel with Vader's diminutive, bespectacled alter ego (Moranis is over a foot shorter than David Prowse's 6'7"), and scenes of Force-assisted heavy-objects lifting, among other parodies of classic *Star Wars* moments. *Alien* and *Planet of the Apes* also get their share of hilarious references here, but the nucleus around which everything revolves is definitely *Star Wars*. Just as *Star Wars* has become the reference for space opera epics, *Spaceballs* is often considered the reference in *Star Wars* spoofs.

Another good example of a spoof pops up in *Austin Powers, The Spy Who Shagged Me* (1999). In the last part of the movie, just as Dr. Evil (Mike Meyers) is trying to flee from his lunar base, Austin Powers (Meyers again) shoots him in the leg. Dr. Evil then says that he wants to tell him something before he dies. He gets up, starts breathing à la Vader, and says, "Austin, I am your father." With tear-filled eyes, Austin asks, "Really?" to which Dr. Evil deadpans, "Not really. I can't back that up."

Even the *Austin Powers* teaser trailer was designed to be a *Star Wars* spoof. With images of starship wreckage that looked suspiciously like *Star Destroyers* and *TIE fighters* blown to bits—complete with a strangely familiar music cue—the camera zoomed in on Dr. Evil in a look-alike Throne Room: "You were expecting someone else?" The announcer even paid tribute to 1999's approaching release of Episode I: "If you see only one movie this summer, see *Star Wars*. If you see two movies, see *Austin Powers, The Spy Who Shagged Me*."

That stunt was a first, no doubt.

The Pirate Movie (1982) is interesting not only because it is a somewhat obscure example of a *Star Wars* spoof but also because it is different from the "collages" that would become typical in the 1990s. *Hot Shots*, *The Naked Gun*, and many of their brethren referenced a dozen different films, if not more, in the midst of their elaborate parodies. Taking a different approach, *The Pirate Movie* was a spoof of *The Pirates of Penzance* (the comic operetta by Gilbert and Sullivan) with just a few outside references thrown in. *Star Wars*, of course, was one such reference. At one point in the movie, the young Frederic must fight a duel with the Pirate King. Lacking the experience of the seasoned sailor, Frederic is quickly disarmed, and his rapier flies out of reach. Frederic looks around for a solution, and then the blade of his rapier gives off a

lightsaber glow while a booming voice calls out to him, "Use the Force, Frederic!" The rapier flies back into the young pirate's hand, and the duel continues. Given that the filmmakers chose to include so few movie references, the fact that one of the rare allusions pointed to the space epic was significant. Five short years after the release of Episode IV, the saga was already part of the cultural pool.

The opening credits of *Naked Gun 33 1/3* (1994) show a series of police-chase sequences with the camera placed on the top of the squad car, just behind the revolving red and blue lights. In one of those sequences, the police car is "driving" down the Death Star trench in the company of a few X-wings.

Toy Story 2 (1999) is rife with *Star Wars* sound effects, from Vader's heavy breathing to exploding blaster bolts. Near the end of the movie, when the gang escapes from the office of the evil toy collector, Buzz Lightyear (Tim Allen) finally comes face to face with his arch-enemy, the Emperor Zurg (Andrew Stanton). Buzz tells him, "You killed my father," to which Zurg replies the inevitable "No, Buzz, I am your father." Even though this has become perhaps the most common *Star Wars* reference, the joke still hasn't lost any of its charm—a testimony to the power and relevance of the original line spoken by Vader at the climax of *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Nudges

A nudge is a reference that keeps a straight face. It can be funny, but it doesn't really try to be. The nudge is short and to the point, and it doesn't necessarily stand out. Less obvious than a spoof, a nudge can be missed if you don't pay attention. The nudge grabs a solid second place when it comes to the most satisfying *Star Wars* reference to "catch," though it is nearly in a dead heat with the Easter egg.

One of the most famous *Star Wars* nudges happens near the beginning of *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984). When Indy (Harrison Ford) and Willie (Kate Capshaw) escape from the poisonous bad guys with the help of Short Round (Jonathan Ke Quan), we see that the cabaret they burst out of is called Club Obi Wan. This follows the long-established Lucasfilm tradition of inside jokes, the most prolific of which is the appearance of the title of George Lucas's first movie, *THX-1138*, almost everywhere, from LucasArts video games to Episode I (one of the battle droids in the end assault bears an alien designation that looks a lot like the numerals 1138).

When Marty McFly (Michael J. Fox) tries to convince his future father George (Crispin Glover) to ask his future mother (Lea Thompson) out to the high-school dance in *Back to the Future* (1985), George refuses and says that nobody on this planet could make him change his mind. Marty stages an elaborate demonstration, culminating with him towering over his father in a seemingly alien hazard suit in the middle of the night proclaiming, "My name is Darth Vader." Between Van Halen guitar riffs, you can hear a familiar breathing sound.

There's a high-speed nudge in *Beverly Hills Cop II* (1987). When Taggart (John Ashton), Rosewood (Judge Reinhold), and Foley (Eddie Murphy) are racing to the final showdown of the movie, Foley comments on Rosewood's performance at the wheel: "Are you driving with your eyes open or are you using the Force?"

"Weird Al" Yankovic's *UHF* (1989) is an interesting case: it features one of the briefest, most discreet nudges ever, yet it is virtually impossible for any member of the audience to miss it. When Stanley Spadowski (Michael Richards) breaks free of his bonds and escapes from the gang of thugs, he does so with the help of his trusty mop. Spadowski waves the mop threateningly, and the audience is treated



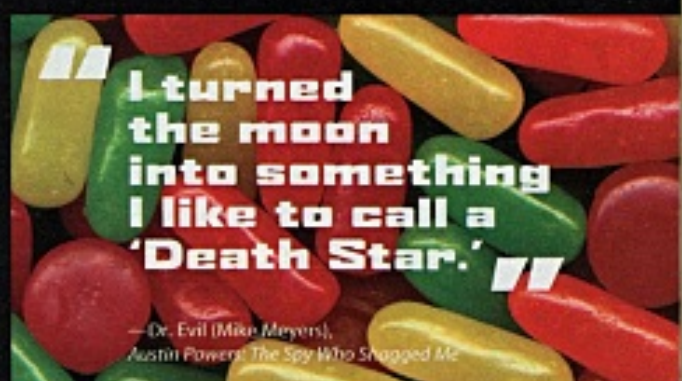
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—Dr. Evil (Mike Myers),
Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me





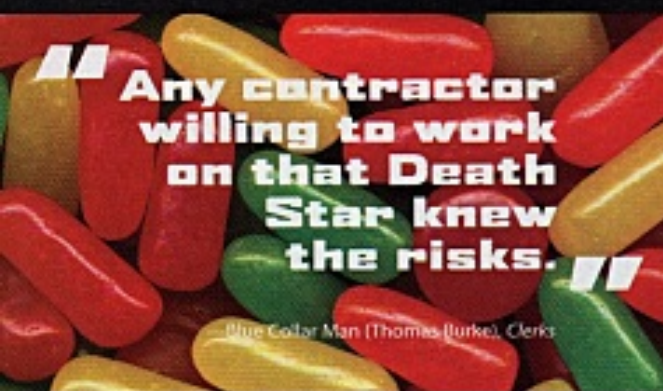
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Blue Collar Man (Thomas Burke), Clerks



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to the familiar sounds of a lightsaber. It lasts little more than a second, but the sound is instantly recognizable, even a full six years after *Return of the Jedi* was a silver screen memory.

Finger Pointings

This is where *Star Wars* references walk down a different road. When Rick Moranis walks in looking like a swollen-headed Darth Vader, or when Zurg tells Buzz that he is his father, there's nothing to indicate that this is a reference to another movie. The gag is built into the film you're watching—it just happens to reach out to *Star Wars*. Someone who hasn't seen any of the saga's films could sit right through a spoof or a nudge and never grasp the fact that it's a reference to something outside the film they're watching. Finger pointings, on the other hand, are references that clearly label themselves. Most often, this type of reference makes the movie it appears in seem more real to the viewer, because the characters talk about *Star Wars* the way fans would. There's no doubt that these characters have seen at least one *Star Wars* movie.

Armageddon (1998) includes a couple of finger pointings. At some point in the movie, A.J. (Ben Affleck) and Oscar (Owen Wilson) argue over who would be which character in *Star Wars*. At the end of the argument, A.J. says, "If anybody's anybody, I'm Han and you're Chewbacca," to which Oscar replies, "Chewie? Have you ever seen *Star Wars*?"

Star Wars Moments

Those were just a few of the most famous *Star Wars* movie references. Can you spot the references in some other movies?

Dramatic

- *Paris Texas* (1984)
- *Reign of Fire* (2002)
- *Se7en* (1995)
- *The Perfect Storm* (2000)
- *Twister* (1996)

Comedic

- *American Pie 2* (2001)
- *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* (1989)
- *Black Knight* (2001)
- *Cocoon: The Return* (1988)
- *Deconstructing Harry* (1997)
- *Hot Shots! Part Deux* (1993)
- *Mystery Men* (1999)

Heartwarming

- *ANTZ* (1998)
- *Chicken Run* (2000)
- *Dr. Dolittle 2* (2001)
- *Explorers* (1985)

Suspenseful

- *Event Horizon* (1997)
- *Poltergeist* (1982)
- *Scream 2* (1997)

A.J. also has an exchange with the Russian cosmonaut, Lev Andropov (Peter Stormare). A.J. asks, "Have you ever heard of Evel Knievel?" Andropov retorts, "No, I never saw *Star Wars*."

Almost all of Kevin Smith's films include, at one point or another, *Star Wars* finger pointings. The director's first feature film, *Clerks* (1994), is no exception to the rule. In one of many related scenes, Dante (Brian O'Halloran) and Randal (Jeff Anderson) discuss at length the morality of destroying the second Death Star while workers—civilians—were laboring on board. "All right, so even if independent contractors are working on the Death Star, why are you uneasy with its destruction?" The hilarious discussion goes on for a while, the two "philosophers" as serious as can be.

The Indian in the Cupboard (1995) illustrates a different kind of finger pointing, one based on associated images rather than dialogue and action. When Omri realizes what sort of miracles his wooden cupboard can do, he embarks upon an experiment: he locks all sorts of toys inside the cupboard. When he lets them out again, they've all come to life, including a 3 3/4" Darth Vader, swinging his glowing red lightsaber around.

Along a similar line, *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982) contains a high finger pointing count, including Elliott's (Henry Thomas) *Star Wars* sheets and action figures. The most effective of those happens when the kids disguise E.T. as a ghost on Halloween night. They happen to walk past a child wearing a Yoda costume, at which point John William's music temporarily transitions into Yoda's theme from *Star Wars*.

Easter Eggs

Extremely hard to spot on first viewing or without the aid of pause and zoom features, the presence of an Easter egg is often acknowledged only after someone from the production has revealed it. While you might miss a nudge if you steal a glance at your date in the darkness of the theater at the wrong moment, Easter eggs can pass you by even if you pay close attention to movie.

One of the most popular *Star Wars* Easter eggs shows up in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981). When Indy and Sallah (John Rhys-Davies) are in the Well of the Souls removing the Ark from its stone casing, hidden among hieroglyphics are engravings of C-3PO and R2-D2. Earlier in the movie, the seaplane that Indy escapes in carries the designation "OB-CPO," a subtle reference to two major characters in the *Star Wars* story.

Visual effect artists are famous for including Easter eggs in their work. The *Star Wars* movies themselves are full of them, from the tiny posters in the cockpit of *A New Hope*'s Rebel Blockade Runner to the plastic soldier welded into the gigantic *Executor* model (and let's not forget the floating potato—or the shoe!—lost in Episode V's asteroid field). One of those visual effects Easter eggs found its way into *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977). When the UFO flies over Devil's Mountain, you can spot an upside-down R2-D2 in the details of the ship's underside (which turns out to be the top when the ship flips over in order to land).

Another visual effects Easter egg can be found in *Star Trek: First Contact* (1996). The big battle against the Borg involves a huge number of ships, among them two YT-1300 Corellian freighters—the same model as the *Millennium Falcon*.

If you're still not convinced, keep your eyes open the next time you're watching a popular movie made in the last two decades. There's a good chance you'll spot some sort of *Star Wars* reference. Whether it's subtle or in your face, there's a good chance it's there. You just have to look for it. Who needs to wait until 2005 to see more *Star Wars* at the movies? 🍿



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STAR WARS

at the

Movies



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"I think George Lucas gonna sue somebody."

—Chaka Luther King (Chris Rock),
Joy and Silent Bob Strike Back



STAR WARS INSIDER 59

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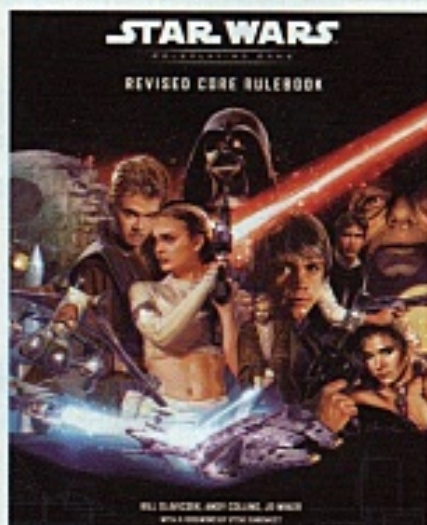


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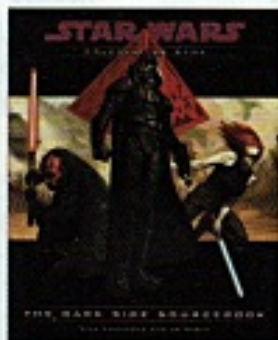
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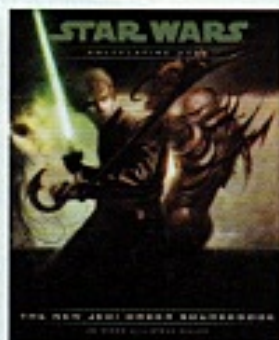


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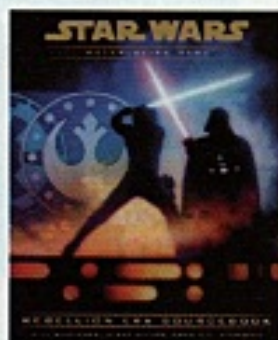
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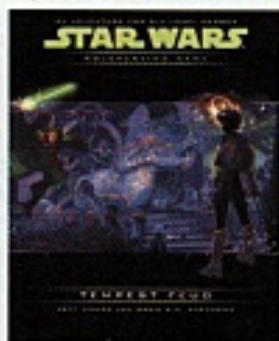
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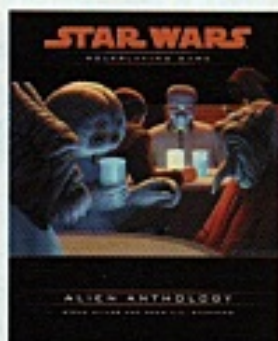
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KAMINOAN TO MY HOUSE

SECRETS OF THE TIPOCA CITY CLONERS

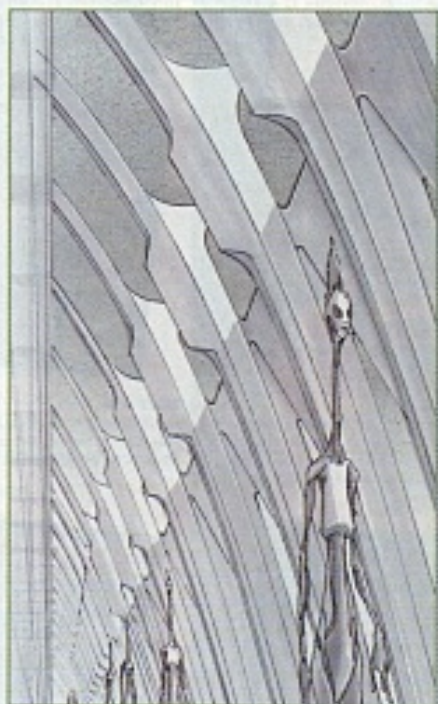
BY ROB COLEMAN
ILM ANIMATION DIRECTOR

JUST SOUTH OF THE RISHI MAZE

It is an age-old struggle—good versus evil—but sometimes the lines are blurred. Who are the heroes? Who are the villains? Usually that's not a problem in the *Star Wars* galaxy, with its noble Jedi Knights and sinister Sith lords. Even scoundrels soon show their true colors, placing them firmly on the light or dark side of the Force. Yet how does one judge the cloners of Kamino? They seem to be a gentle and even peaceful civilization, but from their laboratories and training facilities emerge the deadliest of warriors. When seeing these lithe, intelligent, but ultimately inscrutable characters in the script for *Attack of the Clones*, the animation team had plenty of questions: What was their story? Why were they so secretive? And just what exactly were they up to?

Inhabiting the strange, high-tech cities perched over the raging seas of their planet, the Kaminoans possessed an obviously advanced genetic technology capable of creating huge armies for their prospective clients. Even after reading the script, it was still unclear how these creatures were motivated; there was ambivalence as to whether they cared about the destructive force their armies could inflict. If anything, they seemed completely amoral.

George Lucas provided an early clue, but even that only intensified the enigma surrounding the cloners. He had told Rena Owen, voice actor for Taun We, that the Kaminoans were creatures of "love and light." There had even been early discussions in the art department with concept design supervisor, Doug



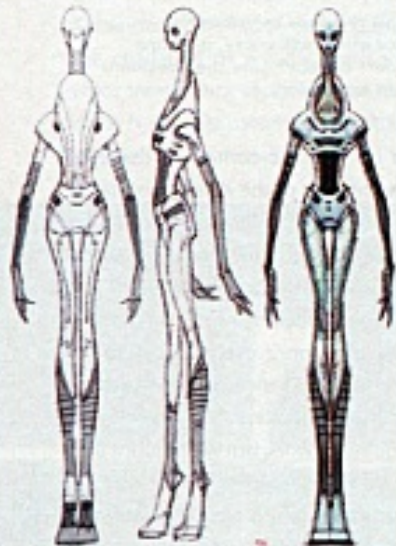
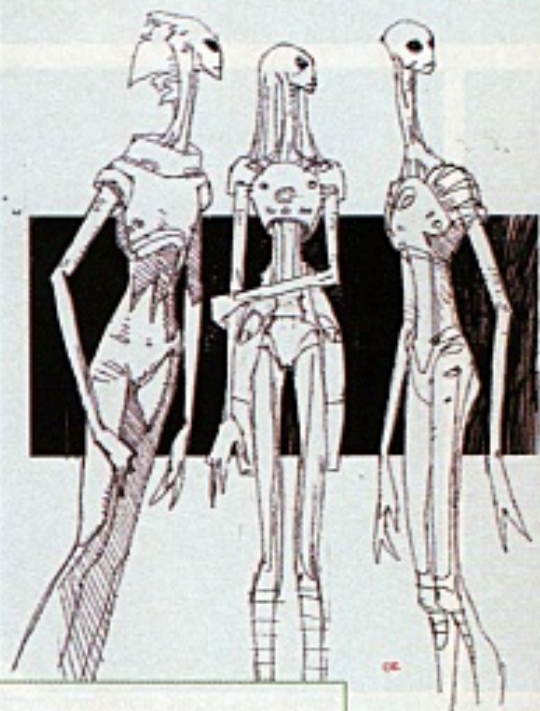
Kaminoans were always intended to be tall and graceful throughout the design process. Concept sketch [LEFT] by Doug Chiang and painting [RIGHT] by Dermot Power.



The initial design concept for the Kaminoans resembles the "gray" aliens of popular myth. Concept painting by Dermot Power.



▲ concept sketches by Bernat Power ▼



Chiang that the Kaminoans and their world should be overexposed, bleaching out the frame with white light. During initial discussions with Lucas, there was a decided ambiguity surrounding the gender of the Kaminoans. He didn't want there to be any clear answers when it came to the inhabitants of Tipoca City; they were to remain shrouded in mystery.

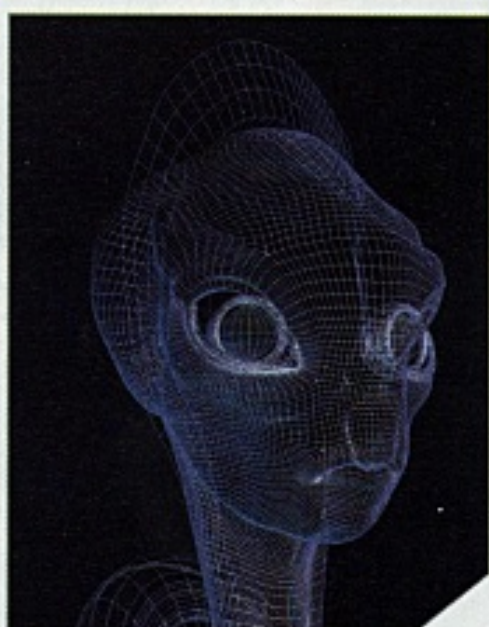
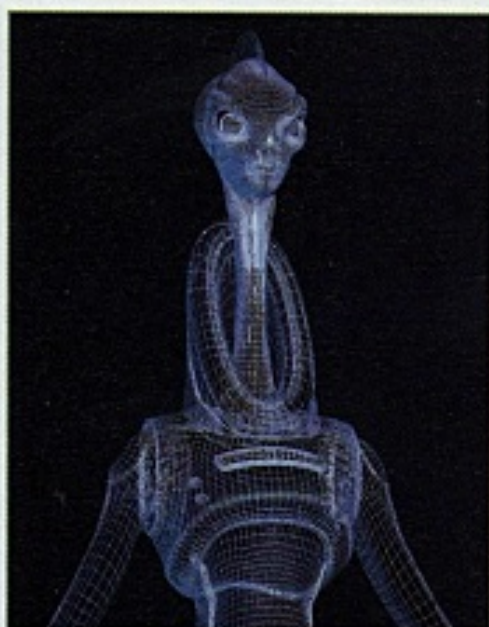
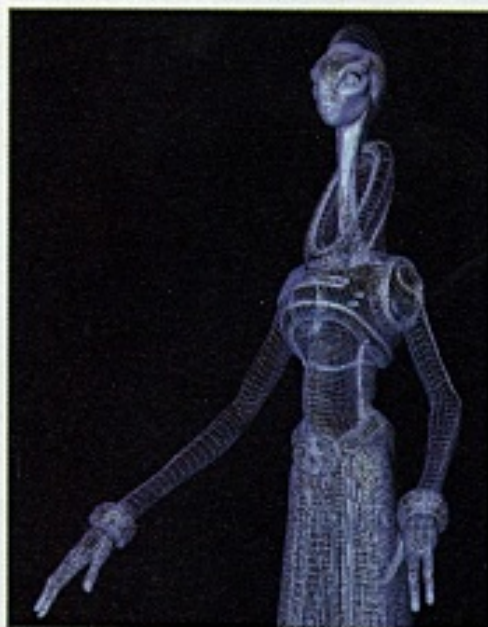
Few things are more frustrating to an animator than not knowing the subject inside and out, because understanding the motivation of an animated character—just as with any actor—is essential to giving it life. Fortunately, Lucas could provide guidance in other ways, detailing the outward clues to whatever lay within the cloners' hearts. He wanted the Kaminoans to have an outward appearance of absolute tranquility. He wanted them to appear serene and in complete control of themselves and their sealed city environment. These qualities were to be in direct opposition to the chaos of the stormy weather lashing

Tipoca City from the outside. There was to be a sense that the Kaminoans had selected this world exactly because it was so remote and inhospitable. The cloners preferred to live a solitary life, far removed from the other civilizations populating the galaxy.

CLONE CONCEPTS

The design of the Kaminoans is reminiscent of the classic icon of the gray, almond-eyed aliens of the 1950s—the blank-faced, dispassionate creatures that haunt our collective conscience whenever we spot an inexplicable light moving in the night sky. Building on earlier inspirations, Doug Chiang, Iain McCaig, and





Dermot Power from the art department at Skywalker Ranch created various concept sketches of what Lucas' Kaminoans might look like. Later those designs served as the basis for the conceptual sculpts built by Michael Murnane and Robert Barnes.

At ILM, modeling supervisor Geoff Campbell used those clay sculpts as reference when he began building the computer-generated versions that would actually be animated and rendered in the final film. Campbell was most interested in creating a believable "face library"—modeled shapes for the eyes, brows, cheeks, and mouth that would be animated together to form the facial expressions. By studying his own face in a mirror at his desk, as well as extreme close-up video reference of animation coordinator Liesle Adlari's eyes and mouth, Campbell carefully constructed



the shapes. Each shape could be blended with others in different percentages to convey a range of emotions from confusion or compassion. The subtle effect of a smile through the

By studying his own face as well as his coworkers and other references, modeling supervisor Geoff Campbell gave the Kaminoans a full range of expressions.

cheeks and up into the corners of the eyes helps sell the realism of the Kaminoan's facial muscles. In animation, everything has to be carefully planned and built; nothing can be taken for granted. The almond eyes of the characters proved especially challenging. It was decided that inner eyeballs should be added so that the audience could see where the Kaminoans were looking. "We weren't sure how it was going to work, but we thought that we would give it a try," admits Campbell.

After modeler Moon-Jung Kang had the sculpted digital costumes, Viewpoint Supervisor Jean Bolte added her own subtle artistry, painting the skin and eye textures that would transform the neutral gray computer models into the full-color faces seen in the film. Lucas wanted the Kaminoans to have skin that was detailed enough to hold up in sustained close-ups. Bolte worked on amphibian-like skin textures that had depth to them, she added subcutaneous capillaries and translucency, as well as a feeling of moisture, to the surface. The resulting layered skin, when rendered, had a realism about it that helped present the Kaminoans as "real" creatures.

VOICES FROM SPACE

The Kaminoan facial expressions and lip-sync were carefully choreographed, coming only after the voice actors had performed their dialogue. Lama Su and Taun We's distinctive voices started with actors Anthony Phelan





ANTHONY PHELAN
voice of Lama Su



RENA OWEN
voice of Taun We

and Rena Owen on set, but they went through quite an evolution before they ended up in their final form. Early tests created by sound designer Ben Burtt included what can only be referred to as "dolphin-like" voice characteristics. The animators struggled to convey the feeling that those voices were emanating from the long neck and small-mouthed Kaminoans. Animator Sean Curran enjoyed the challenge of working with the different voice treatments, especially the most unusual ones. "I actually preferred the more distorted version!" he confesses.



The goal in lip-synching animated characters is always to persuade the audience that the voice they hear comes from the creature. The animators study the voice actor's performances, looking for any physical actions or facial expressions that they might include in their animation to help capture the reality and bestow it to the animated character. The facial movements of the Kaminoans had to be subtle and controlled, making the task that much more difficult to overcome.

DREAM WORLDS

Animators blended movement inspirations from Tai Chi meditation with the self-assured, distinctive stride of runway fashion models to create a sense of inner peace for the Kaminoans. "I kept imagining how a supermodel in high stilettos would walk and sit," says animator Sylvia Wong. The goal was to make the cloners move in a fluid manner that demonstrated their inner serenity. While working on their distinctive walk, animator Kevin Martel studied Audrey Hepburn in *My Fair Lady*, particularly a scene in which she saunters elegantly toward the camera. The research paid off, as he says, "Studying these slow and graceful movements gave me a great starting point for how to give the Kaminoans their smooth and graceful way of regally gliding from one place to another."

"I KEPT IMAGINING HOW A SUPERMODEL IN HIGH STILETTOS WOULD WALK AND SIT."

—SYLVIA WONG
ANIMATOR

Taun We and Lama Su's hand movements also had a flourish and fluidity to them, similar in some ways to human sign language. It was our hope that those actions would add an extra level of sophistication to these mysterious cloners. To Kaminoan animator Sean Curran, the cloners were dreamy, ethereal creatures. "Obi-Wan's reaction to them always seemed to be, 'Am I really seeing what I'm seeing? Or is this all a dream?'"

One of the aspects of the characters that would be added after the animation was completed was the digital clothing. Unlike Yoda's robes, the Kaminoans were designed to wear silky, delicate skirts that needed to have a graceful and gentle flow. James Tooley's cloth team created some fabulous simulations that further accented the dreamlike qualities of the Kaminoans. Favorite

Live action, animation, and digital sets come together to make Kamino and its inhabitants come to life.

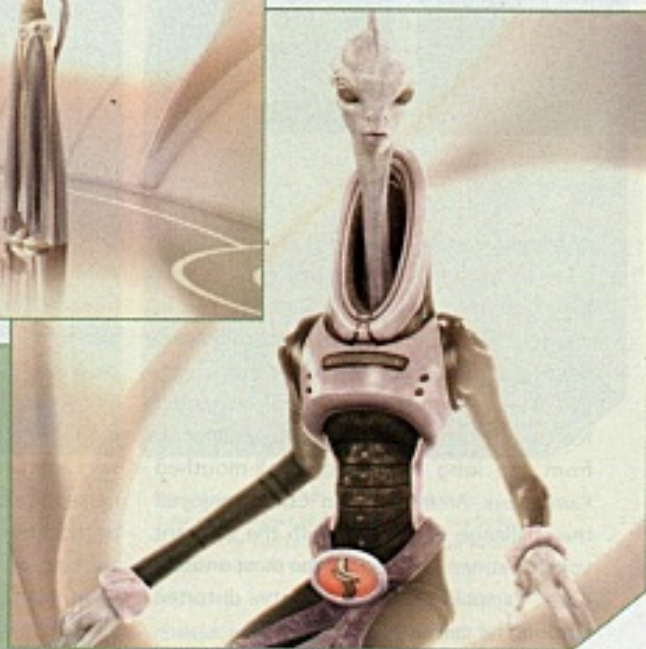




Obi-Wan's seat looks comfortable, but it's all digital. McGregor sat on a small illuminated box on set.

BLUE PLANET

The live-action photography of the Kaminoan scenes was a surreal experience. Ewan McGregor had a bluescreen stage with only an illuminated cube for him to sit on. With him were the two voice actors wearing construction helmets with two-dimensional images of Taun We and Lama Su taped to the top. The images were there so that McGregor would know where to look, since the animated characters were to be much taller than the human voice actors were. Owen and Phelan were there to perform their lines with McGregor, thus establishing the timing and pacing for the scene. The scenery and the animated characters would be added months later back at ILM.



among the shots was the subtle use of fractal, digital "wind" on Taun We's costume as it was blown through the doorway of Tipoca City. By controlling the turbulence of the wind, Tooley's team was able to create the illusion of silky fabric fluttering in the air. Great care and attention to detail combined to create digital clothing simulations that looked as real as Ewan McGregor's costume.

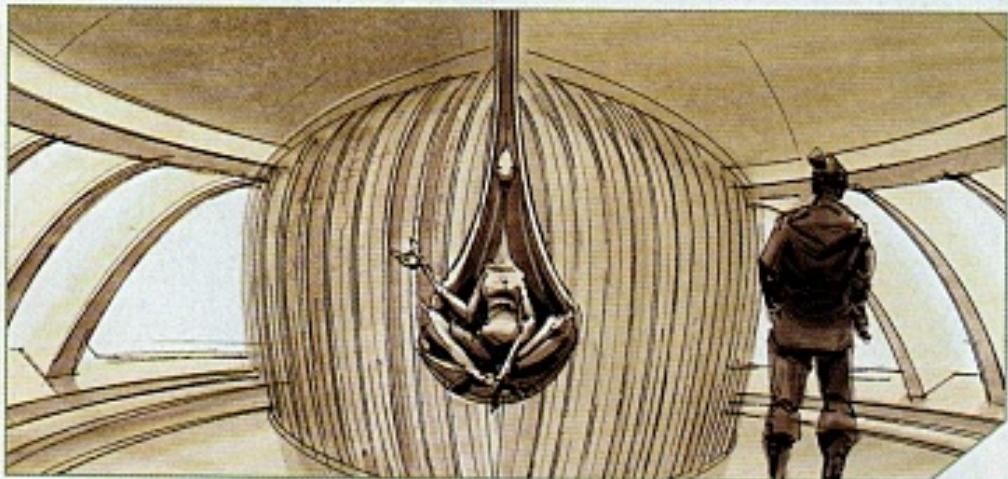
TIPOCA PUTTING

Visual Effects Supervisor Pablo Helman oversaw the Kaminoan worlds. Through a combination of miniature models and computer graphics, Helman and his team created the exterior digital ocean of the planet's surface with Tipoca City standing on its stilts high above the waterline. For the interior of Lama Su's office, the team photographed a miniature and combined it

with both the bluescreen footage of Obi-Wan and the animated Kaminoans.

Computer graphics were used to create much of the environment for Obi-Wan's tour of the cloning facility. The production design called for an incredibly vast space filled with thousands of jars containing clone fetuses. Computer Graphics Supervisor David Meny worked with Helman to create a layout and production plan of this amazing environment. "The CG hatchery was one of the most complicated rendering setups ever," says Meny. Jeff Doran's compositing team then worked with the rendered set elements, the bluescreen live-action, the rendered animation characters, and miniature corridors to create the environment that Lucas had envisioned.

The goal of the visual effects and animation teams at ILM is to create believable characters and worlds that serve the director's vision. The artwork, sculptures, and script give us pieces to the huge puzzle that is the *Star Wars* galaxy, but Lucas never gives us the whole picture. We may never know whether the Kaminoans were as innocent of wrongdoing as they would have Obi-Wan believe, but the digital realism of the Kaminoans facial performances, body movements, and digital clothing helped the audience accept them as living, breathing creatures—whether they be good, evil, or cautiously neutral. ☺



▲ concept sketch by Edwin Natividad

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REPUBLIC HOLONET NEWS

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE REVEALS BIO-WAR VACCINE

MINISCI ARCOLOGY, CORUSCANT—The recent scourge of biological weapons employed by Separatist forces are no longer a threat, according to a report from the Republic's Ministry of Science.

"Advancements in biological counter-agents have rendered the Separatist pathogens harmless," said Minister Glimmet Ledd, a member of the prestigious Luurlan Genetic Enclave. "Data provided by the Jedi Knights have given us the key to understanding how the Separatists build these microbes and how best to destroy them."

Many Gungan colonists were killed by the release of a biological weapon on Ohma-D'un, a moon of Naboo. Jedi investigators were able to capture raw toxin samples from the Separatist outpost of Queyta eight months ago. Since then, the Ministry of Science has been developing vaccines for the deadly weapon.

"Analysis of the underlying structure of these weapons suggest that they are all built from the same principles," said Ledd. "By comparing our research of the trihexalon threat of a few years ago, we were able to formulate a successful vaccine."

Critics question whether the announcement of a cure will only prompt the Separatists to develop deadlier biological weapons. "Our scientists are ready to deal with any advancements; in this case, it is imperative we announce to the people of the Republic that a preventative solution awaits," said Ledd.

The Ministry of Science and the Refugee Relief Movement are partnering to produce and distribute



the vaccine to med-centers throughout the Republic. The report indicates that a number of non-human species are especially susceptible to the Separatist toxins and are strongly encouraged to register with Republic health organizations for immediate inoculation. *Full Story>>*

PALPATINE REWARDS JEDI EFFORTS

JEDI TEMPLE, CORUSCANT—Recognizing "the selfless valor in the protection of the Republic and her worlds," Supreme Chancellor Palpatine recognized the honorable deeds of Jedi Knight Avan Post and Jedi Master Shaak Ti today with a gift of a grove of ch'hala trees in a ceremony held at the Jedi Temple.

Avan Post of Chandrila was recognized posthumously; he perished last month in a skirmish over Ando, during which he destroyed seven Techno Union Hardcell-class vessels. Post had served in many battlefronts early in the conflict. Asran



Headows, Master Curator of the Galactic Museum on Coruscant announced the creation of a special exhibit honoring the fallen Jedi by year's end.

"Ch'hala trees are among my favorite specimens of the Republic's gardens. They are rigidly implacable yet sensitive to even the slightest

disturbance, much like our revered friends in the Jedi Temple. I humbly ask that you accept these tokens of appreciation," said Palpatine.

"I am honored to receive this distinction in service to the Republic. Nonetheless, Jedi eschew possessions, and therefore I donate this gift to the Jedi Temple," said Ti. Her actions on Geonosis, Centares, and Dagou were cited by Palpatine in a list of notable accomplishments by the Togruta Jedi Master.

Ti donated the grove of four dozen infant purple-green trees to the Jedi Council. The spectacular ch'hala trees have pressure-sensitive pigmentation in their bark that allows them to change hue and pattern when exposed to sound.

"We accept this recognition with gratitude, though it is our duty to protect the Republic," said Jedi Master Mace Windu. The Jedi Master then promised the infant grove would find prominent placement within the Jedi Temple.

CIS SHADOWFEED

"S H E E D I N G L I G H T O N T H E I R L I E S"



Illustrations by Joe Cernoney

TOP STORY

Republic Forces Shred Bassadroans

AGAO, BASSADRO—Demonstrating the desperate lengths to which the Republic will go to further their stranglehold on outlying worlds, evidence has surfaced that a Jedi-led battalion of clone troopers wiped out the entire mining village of Agao-Nir in the glassy volcanic crags of the Agao Ranges, killing an estimated 400 native villagers.

Transmissions from CIS Major Domb Treator, former Appropriations Chief of the Techno Union, indicate that the clones began firing at the natural rock formations surrounding the Bassadroan village, and the Jedi General would order cease-fire only upon Treator's surrender.

The barrage of anti-armor concussion missiles into the razor-sharp obsidian created a deadly storm of shrapnel that sliced through the mining village. The airborne rock fragments also damaged many CIS assets under Treator's command.

Rather than have the Republic forces further target civilians or potential laborers, Treator surrendered. With the loss of Bassadro, the Commerce Guild Presidente Shu Mai is recalculating mining quotas among strategic producer worlds to make up for the deficit.

"The callous lack of value shown by the Republic in this exercise is appalling," said Shu Mai in an official statement. "Each of those miners represented a hard worker with invested skill levels. The synergistic aggregate of the village total was far beyond the worth of each individual."

"The callous lack of value shown by the Republic in this exercise is appalling." —Commerce Guild Presidente Shu Mai

Confederate Credits Gaining Equity

HARNAIDAN, MUUNILINST—Though the non-exclusivity pact of the Intergalactic Banking Clan may have limited their military contributions to the Confederacy of Independent Systems cause, it has allowed the commerce entity to continue operations within Republic financial circles and bolster the value of the CIS credit.

"Our centuries-old lineage within the Core has lent credence to the newly minted currency, which represents the assets of the Separatist worlds," said Bank Communications Officer Lo Vapeet in his monthly statement. "In many worlds of the Mid Rim, it is trading at more than 50 percent of the value of a standard Republic credit, and in the Outer Rim, it is the exclusive currency of hundreds of worlds." [Full Story>>](#)

CONFEDERACY OF INDEPENDENT SYSTEMS

WALK LIKE A TRANDOSHAN

ULTIMATE ALIEN ANTHOLOGY EXPANDS THE GAMING UNIVERSE

BY MICHAEL MIKAELIAN

The *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* from Wizards of the Coast puts you in the *Star Wars* universe as a Jedi, scoundrel, bounty hunter, or whatever else you can imagine, and gives you more than a dozen alien species from which to choose. *Ultimate Alien Anthology* upgrades your selection to 180 different alien species drawn from the films, novels, comic books, and video games. Moreover, it includes character-building options such as alien gear, optional feats, and specialized prestige classes.

This new sourcebook is no mere reprint. The original *Alien Anthology* provided the framework for this new edition, but they are vastly different books. To make room for all the alien species entries, the creature entries from *Alien Anthology* have been removed. (Creatures will get the "ultimate" treatment in the upcoming *Ultimate Adversaries* sourcebook, due at a later date.)

ALIENATION

Ultimate Alien Anthology is the single largest resource of its kind. It details, in-depth, 180 **sentient** alien species. Each entry includes information about a species' personality, physical description, homeworld, language, names, age in years, and suggestions for creating heroes of that species. Ever wonder what Shaak Ti's homeworld is? Why the Togrutu hail from Shili, a temperate wilderness planet located in the Expansion Region. How about the age of maturity for a Hutt? Until they're about 100 years old, they're still considered youths. You get the picture—literally, because each entry also has an illustration showing what the typical alien of that species looks like.

Where does one find 180 different alien species anyway? There were a lot of aliens created for the seven feature films (don't forget those two Ewok TV-movies) and numerous printed adventures. *Ultimate Alien Anthology* includes nearly all of the film saga species but has left generous space for favorites introduced in Del Rey and Bantam novels, Scholastic books, Dark Horse and Marvel comic books, LucasArts video games, and even West End Games' *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*.

The Expanded Universe provided a great deal of information featured in *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, but few species are as precisely detailed as the sourcebook required them to be. Many minor details had to be determined to create a complete listing for most species.

POSITIVELY BEASTLY

"A beastwarden lives a rugged, rural life. She travels in the company of herd animals, maintains delicate relations with savage predators, respects nature's scavengers, and realizes the importance of even the lowliest vermin. The beastwarden's most important bond is with her trusted feline."

BROTHERS GRIM

"The Nikto evolved on Kinton, a harsh planet located deep within Hutt Space. Mutations triggered by the planet's radioactive atmosphere have bred five different (but genetically compatible) Nikto subspecies, each one adapted to a specific environmental niche."



In the *Star Wars* universe, a **sentient** alien species is one that is intelligent. The definition of sentient is "capable of feeling and perception," something all living things are on some level. In *Star Wars*, sentient aliens interact socially and are guided by their observations and emotions, while non-sentient creatures are guided largely by instinct.

HEROIC EXPLOITS

Ultimate Alien Anthology offers seven prestige classes and fifteen feats, most with a decidedly alien bent. The prestige classes include the aerobat, beastwarden, big-game hunter, changeling, findsman, mystic agent, and telepath. The aerobat, for instance, requires that the character can fly; he can use a jet pack, the Force, or some other means, but the character gains the benefits of the aerobat prestige class only when flying. This option gives a natural born flyer a distinct advantage when choosing the aerobat prestige class. The changeling, on the other hand, must belong to a species with the ability to shapeshift. A telepath can be a member of any species, but members of telepathic species get off easy when it comes to the prestige class' requirements.

Illustration by Jeremy Jarvis

Two prestige classes that appeared in the original *Alien Anthology* made the transition to the *Ultimate* edition. The big-game hunter remains largely unchanged, while the findsman (originally the Gand findsman) has been completely reworked to be more accessible as a character option and still accurately reflect the species' traditional hunting religion.



New feats added to *Ultimate Alien Anthology* give alien characters a distinct edge. For example, only aliens with naturally armored bodies can select the feats Chitinous and Thick Hide, improving the protection offered. Also, taloned and toothed aliens can select the

XENOPHOBIA

"Ryn [LEFT] have a reputation as thieves and confidence tricksters, and their personal philosophy about doing whatever it takes to survive only strengthens that reputation."
 "Sakiyons [SECOND FROM LEFT] are cautious in their dealings with other species and usually place the interests of themselves and their communities above others."
 "Sonyassans [THIRD FROM LEFT] ruthlessly prowl the Moddell Sector in their scavenged ships, attacking anyone who crosses their path."
 "Proud and aloof, Sarkans [RIGHT] value ritual and protocol and have little patience for those who demonstrate an ignorance of Sarkan customs and culture."

Razor Claws and Razor Bite feats, respectively, to improve the amount of damage these attacks deal. To balance out these natural advantages, characters of any species can select the Know Enemy feat for an added edge when dealing with members of one specific species.

BIZARRE BAZAAR

Aliens and character options are good, but the most interesting element of a truly alien species is often their stuff. Dozens of specialized alien equipment entries appear throughout *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, accompanying the appropriate species entries. These items include everything from Vonduun crab-shell armor—the living Yuuzhan Vong armor that can withstand a lightsaber blade—to the deadly charic—a Chiss-made blaster rifle that effortlessly penetrates most armor.

A few species require specialized equipment to stay alive in typical humanoid-friendly environments. Among them are the ammonia-breathing Gand and the low-pressure Skakoans. Other species follow the Wookiees' example of specialized weapons, including the Rodian cryogen whip—which uses a super-cooled coil for added pain and disorientation—and the Mon Calamari subaqua blaster—a powerful underwater energy weapon. Rounding out this strange collection of alien equipment are odd items that are neither weapons, armor, nor vital for survival. Among them are the often Bith-associated kloo horn, the Cerean kasha meditation crystal, and Qwohog vocalizer mask.

Ultimate Alien Anthology is a 224-page hardcover sourcebook available in April 2003. *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* players and gamemasters, as well as Expanded Universe aficionados, are sure to drool like a famished Hutt in anticipation. ☺

For more information about the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*, visit www.wizards.com/starwars.



I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING . . .
 "Powerful telepaths can kill with a thought and project their minds across great distances."



Illustration by Doug Alexander Gregory

Illustration by Pudehead



THAT'S NO MOON!

THE DEATH STAR ECLIPSES THE BATTLE OF YAVIN

BY MICHAEL MIKAELIAN

The Star Wars Trading Card Game from Wizards of the Coast will be celebrating its first birthday this April, but the players are the ones getting the gifts. The Battle of Yavin expansion set somehow finds a way to squeeze every major element of Star Wars: Episode IV *A New Hope* into a 90-card set. It has all the major heroes and villains, the fastest hunk of junk in the galaxy, and the ultimate power in the universe.

RECURRING ROLES

Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, Obi-Wan Kenobi, and Darth Vader return to the Star Wars TCG with several new Character cards each in Battle of Yavin. Thanks to the game's stacking feature—which increases a unique card's abilities by "stacking" a different

version of that card underneath it, up to four different copies—new versions of a Character are a welcome addition. Players will now have seven Lukes, six Vaders, five Leias, and eight Obi-Wans to choose from when building their decks. Other notable returning cards include R2-D2, C-3PO, Luke's Landspeeder, and Luke's X-wing.

Battle of Yavin's new additions to the Star Wars TCG come well prepared for stacking as well. Han Solo, previously a Battle of Yavin preview card available only in foil version in *A New Hope* packs, makes his debut. Wherever Han is, his faithful companion Chewbacca and space freighter *Millennium Falcon* are never far behind. On the Dark Side, the new stackers are the allegedly foul-smelling Grand Moff Tarkin and his favorite superweapon, the Death Star. Four Hans and three each of Chewie, Tarkin, and the *Falcon*, give players plenty of options.

EXTRA SPECIAL EDITION

Just as the *Attack of the Clones* and *A New Hope* expansion sets included artwork created just for the Star Wars TCG, so does

Battle of Yavin. The new images are among the most stunning of all created for the card game, adding the option of a ground assault of the Rebel base on Yavin 4 to the Empire's battle plan. Four ground vehicles, each illustrated against the lush jungle surface of Yavin 4, are easy to spot but might not be immediately recognizable: the Chariot Light Assault Vehicle, first described in Timothy Zahn's *Heir to*

the Empire; the Rebel Armored Freerunner, introduced in Zahn's *Dark Force Rising*; and the Juggernaut and Mobile Command Base, both created for West End Games' *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* and resurrected years later for the *Star Wars Force Commander* PC game. All of these vehicles are tough customers and are sure to see lots of play.

A scattering of less obvious new illustrations also appear in Battle of Yavin. Among them are Luke's Skyhopper, the often-heard-about-yet-rarely-seen Womp Rat, and the Imperial Landing Craft.

As with the *A New Hope* expansion set, images for Battle of Yavin were captured from a print of the Special Edition version of Episode IV. As a result, the set includes some less familiar imagery you'll see only in the updated movie: hordes of stormtroopers, the expanded view of the Rebel fighter squadrons, and a more detailed Mos Eisley.

DEATH STAR APPROACHING

Creating something as massive as the Death Star for the Star Wars TCG required that the design strike a delicate balance between game mechanics and story concerns. Three of the four most powerful cards in game, the three versions of the Death Star are also the three most expensive cards in the game at





12, 15, and 18 build points. They supplant Mace Windu (A), Trade Federation Control Core, and the Mission card Destroy Alderaan, which previously held the record in a three-way tie at 10 build points.

If it weren't for the Death Star's key weakness, it's possible that the space station would have cost prohibitively more. All three versions of Tarkin's technological terror share a common trait—a weakness, if you will. They all bear the text: "Each Starfighter gets Critical Hit 3 as long as it's attacking the Death Star." Not only does this ability reflect the station's vulnerability in the story, it helps balance out its effectiveness in the game. Card games often use this kind of negative ability to justify a lower cost and add an interesting twist to a powerful card.

On a more positive note, each version of the Death Star has its own unique ability for the Dark Side player to exploit. The smallest, Death Star (B), allows you to spend 1 build point to search your deck for a Starfighter and put it in your hand. Since this ability doesn't tap the Death Star, you can still use its 12 power to attack in the same turn. The middle one, Death Star (A), lets you decide whether you want to attack another Space unit using its 15 power or a ground unit using its 8-power Bombard ability. The largest, Death Star (C), can either attack with its massive 20 power or, if you control the Space arena, simply tap to wipe out every unit—Light and Dark—in the Ground arena.

ONE IN A MILLION

Despite the Death Star's awesome power, there are some new features in Battle of

“CREATING SOMETHING AS MASSIVE AS THE DEATH STAR FOR THE STAR WARS TCG REQUIRED THAT THE DESIGN STRIKE A DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN GAME MECHANICS AND STORY CONCERNS.”

Yavin that can bypass its defenses, much as Luke does in the climax of Episode IV. Luke's X-wing (B) is quick and sturdy, and it has the Critical Hit 4 ability (does 4 more damage if you roll at least one natural six). This, coupled with the Death Star's own endowment of Critical Hit 3 upon enemy Starfighters, increases Luke's X-wing's Critical Hit total to 7. If Luke Skywalker (E) is onboard, that total increases to 11. In that case, one roll of 6 deals 12 damage, enough to destroy the Death Star (B) outright.

Players looking for a more spectacular way of finishing off the Death Star might opt for Blow This Thing, which reduces your attack to 1 die. If your attack hits (and the damage isn't prevented), the target is destroyed. Putting all of your faith in one die roll is risky, especially since there are many ways to prevent 1 point of damage. Luke's X-wing (A) from the previous expansion set is better suited to take advantage of Blow This Thing; combine it with this set's Obi-Wan's Guidance Battle card and you're guaranteed that the 1 die roll will be hit.

RETALIATORY STRIKES

As if Battle of Yavin wasn't cool enough already, it also introduces a new ability to the Star Wars TCG, Retaliate. It works this way: "Retaliate X (if a unit in the same arena as this unit attacks this unit, this unit does X dice of damage to that unit when the attack ends.)" Chewbacca's surly attitude seems the most likely inspiration for this ability, as all three versions of Chewie have this ability in varying degrees. If nothing else, this fact lends more credence to the phrase, "It's not wise to upset a Wookiee."

Grand Moff Tarkin (A) also provides a powerful Retaliate ability, but not for himself. Instead, the Imperial leader gives all of your Jedi Retaliate 4 for a low, low cost of 1 Force.



Darth Vader (A or C) from A New Hope and this version of Tarkin make a killer combo; Vader can spend 1 Force to Intercept an attack made against Tarkin, and then spend another Force to Retaliate for 4 dice of damage. It's no wonder Leia wasn't surprised to see Tarkin "holding Vader's leash."

For more information about the Star Wars Trading Card Game, visit www.wizards.com/starwars.

STAR WARS GALAXIES UPDATE

BEARING THE LOAD: TATOONIE OVERPOPULATION

BY HADEN BLACKMAN

Over the past few months, *Star Wars Insider* has provided readers with a unique look into the beta tests for *Star Wars Galaxies*, the first massively multiplayer online game set in the galaxy far, far away. Recently, LucasArts and Sony Online Entertainment concluded the second phase of the beta test process. During the first phase, developers focused on gathering feedback and finding bugs related to combat, creature spawning, chatting, movement, and other core game systems. This time, they really turned up the pressure.

WHAT A LOAD

The second phase of beta testing placed more emphasis on "load testing." Massively multiplayer online games must allow thousands of players to be in the game world simultaneously, where they can interact and adventure together. The back-end server technology required for this environment is extremely complex, making it difficult to build, test, and optimize. A bug in the system can cause the servers to become unstable; in the worst cases, this results in a server crash that prevents players from accessing the game at all. To track down these bugs and ensure that the game can support the thousands of players who dream of living in the *Star Wars* universe, the team holds "load tests" in which as many players as possible are crammed into the game. Also known as "stress tests," these beta-test sessions allow developers to gauge the current state of server technology, and must be held every time designers add new systems, features, or significant content. Load

tests also allow developers to invite more testers into the beta program; the pool of beta testers for *Star Wars Galaxies* had reached nearly 6,000 by early December 2002.

During the load tests, programmers study a constant flow of data, monitoring the server performance as hundreds of players enter and leave the game, spread out across a planet, and engage in combat with computer-controlled creatures. But what do players do during load tests? During the earliest trials, the developers asked players simply to congregate on Tatooine and chat with one another. This activity mirrored the earliest beta tests designed to exercise the chat system, although on a much greater scale: instead of dozens players hanging out together, this time there were hundreds, all chatting and emoting. As the developers became more comfortable with the server stability, they began turning on other important systems, allowing larger groups to engage in combat and take missions.



ALL THE PRETTY LITTLE BANTHAS

The two most important additions to the load tests were cities and spawning. While players had explored cities during smaller tests, adding all of Tatooine's cities to the game and allowing players to visit them simultaneously proved challenging. This was due, in part, to the size of the cities, which are sprawling hives of Imperial and Rebel recruiters, skill trainers, mission terminals, medical centers, training facilities, and hotels. Including spawning was also a significant step forward because the spawning system (which generates enemies and encounters) is triggered by players and their locations. If only 100 players are online, the spawning system creates content for only those 100 players; multiply that number by five, and the spawning system is working five times as hard. Each entity on the server adds to the overall server load; the server needs to be able to support not only the thousands of players who will enter the game but also the tens of thousands of creatures and non-player characters (NPCs) generated for them to interact with.

During phase two of beta testing, the developers also continued to roll out new systems for the testers to try out. The pet system, which allows players to train creatures, was one of the most popular. During the first






tests of the pet system, the players found themselves surrounded by baby banthas. By approaching one of them slowly, a tester could begin training. At the most basic level, players train their pets to obey simple commands, like "attack my target" or "follow me." A player can also name his pet and teach it to respond to that name. In addition, players can condition pets to associate various commands with verbal cues; a player might teach his pet to follow whenever that player types "Heel!" or anything else the player can imagine. Within about an hour of the pet system coming online, the desert was filled with beta testers shouting things like, "Bobo, come hither!" or, "Sic 'em Romulus!"

SCOUTING GALAXIES

During load testing, the developers are also keenly interested in seeing how the servers perform when players move around the world. As soon as cities and other sites (like Jabba's palace and Fort Tusken) became available for exploration, the developers encouraged players to visit all of Tatooine's major sites.

Exploration is an integral part of the game, almost as important as combat or social interaction. Many massively multiplayer gamers thrive on wandering the huge realms common in these games. As they explore, they discover new locations, enemies, and adventures. Eventually, *Star Wars Galaxies* will provide

“EXPLORATION IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE GAME, ALMOST AS IMPORTANT AS COMBAT OR SOCIAL INTERACTION.”



between nine and twelve planets for players to visit. The initial beta tests were limited to Tatooine, although as of early December, the developers were preparing to release Endor and Naboo to the beta testers. The remaining identified planets include: Yavin 4 from the films; Corellia, Lok, Dathomir, and Talus drawn from the Expanded Universe; and the newly invented Rori, one of Naboo's three moons. Each planet's active territory is positively massive, measuring about fifteen kilometers by fifteen kilometers. This real estate allows players ample room for exploration, as well as providing plenty of space for the construction of houses, mining facilities, and other player-owned structures.

The beta testers have already roamed far and wide on Tatooine, although they've done so in very controlled test sessions. Exploration can be dangerous, especially when using a novice character with relatively weak weapons. While virtually every character is likely to do

difficult terrain, locate valuable minerals and other resources, and build camps where players can recuperate from recent battles.


GUNFIGHT IN BESTINE

Along with pets and greater freedom of movement, the developers have allowed the testers to begin dueling one another. In *Star Wars Galaxies*, players can challenge one another to duels to allow for short, one-on-one combat sessions. Duels were especially important to help balance combat variables, such as how much damage certain weapons cause, weapon accuracy, and player-character attributes. During one beta test session, about three dozen testers engaged in blaster duels in and around Bestine. The developers and testers quickly learned that careful use of a character's special abilities, specifically an "Aim" skill, grants a considerable edge in battle. It was also discovered that grenades didn't cause nearly enough damage.

The most exciting moments during the dueling beta test session occurred when testers began playing cat-and-mouse games through the streets of Bestine. Players found that they could elude their attackers for a short time by ducking into buildings or hiding in alleys. A player's enemies still appeared on radar, but quite a few beta testers admitted that, in the heat of the battle, they lost sight of their quarry, only to be ambushed a short time later.

BATTLE FOR ENDOR

As of December 2002, the developers were on the verge of rolling out the rest of the game's features and key systems to the beta testers. One of the most highly anticipated additions is the Battlefield system, which was designed to immerse players in the Galactic Civil War and capture the feel of such epic conflicts as the Battle of Hoth. Next issue, *Star Wars Insider* will leap into the trenches to provide a full debriefing on the first *Star Wars Galaxies* battles! ☺



some amount of exploring, there are a few character types extremely well-suited to dangerous travel. Many other roleplaying games define their player characters through "classes," but *Star Wars Galaxies* uses a skill-based "profession" system instead. Characters are defined first and foremost by their skills, which are grouped into logical professions (like "marksman" or "medic"). Because travel can often be dangerous, would-be explorers will likely need some combat skills as well. The game also offers a profession uniquely designed for exploration: the scout. Scouts have the ability to move more quickly over dif-

TWIN SUNS FOR TWIN ERAS

TROY DENNING BRIDGES STAR WARS TALES OLD AND NEW IN TATOOINE GHOST

BY JASON FRY

No planet burns in the imagination of *Star Wars* fans quite the way Tatooine does, with its twin suns and its menagerie of desert creatures. And despite Luke Skywalker's dismissal of his homeworld as the planet farthest from the bright center of the universe, no planet occupies center stage in George Lucas' saga more often. We've visited Tatooine in four of the five films, and one can't help but suspect we'll return for a final time when Episode III hits theaters in 2005.

What better setting, then, for an ambitious novel that ties together the prequel and classic eras? That's what veteran *Star Wars* author Troy Denning delivers in *Tatooine Ghost*.

RESEARCHING STAR WARS HISTORY

Tatooine Ghost centers around a New Republic mission that pits Leia, Han, Chewbacca, and C-3PO against Imperial forces in a bid to recover an Alderaanian moss-painting, *Killik Twilight*, whose workings contain the codes safeguarding a secret Rebel communication network. As the action unfolds, Leia also finds herself enmeshed in the Skywalker past. Readers will be reacquainted with Anakin Skywalker's childhood friends, as well as with the Lars homestead and Beru's sister. Most importantly, Leia stumbles across a "palm diary" once owned by Shmi Skywalker, which lets Leia learn how her grandmother won her way to freedom from Watto and a happy marriage to Cliegg Lars.

To set the stage for *Tatooine Ghost*, Denning re-read the novels set before and after the period in which his would unfold. On one side was Dave Wolverton's *The Courtship of Princess Leia*, set eight years after *Return of the Jedi*; on the other was Timothy Zahn's Thrawn trilogy, set a year after that.

"I knew at the beginning of the Thrawn trilogy that Leia was pregnant and she was practicing with the Force," Denning says. "And I knew at the end of *The Courtship of Princess Leia* she was obviously not pregnant, just barely married, and she seemed to be Force-sensitive but hadn't made the commitment to training with the Force."

Clearly, Denning notes, Leia had made an extremely important transition—and that

helped him see the story *Tatooine Ghost* would tell. He had to show Han and Leia's relationship maturing, and he had to show Leia starting to trust the Force and use it and seek it out. "That really helped me get a handle on the whole central theme of the book," he says.

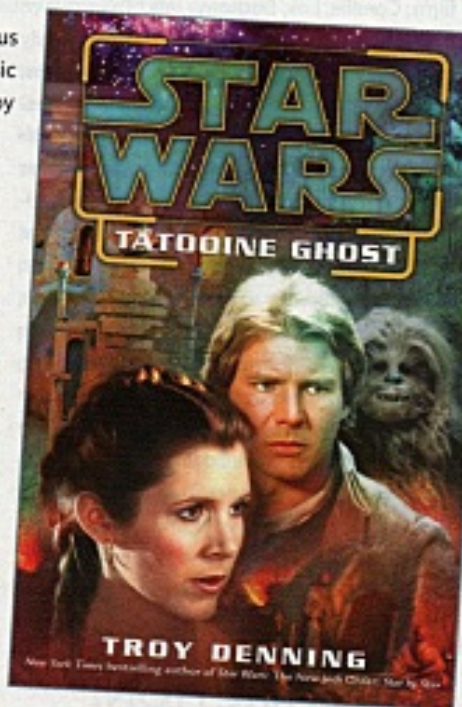
BRIDGING THE GAPS

Denning explains that when Del Rey asks an author to write a *Star Wars* novel, he or she gets a topic and a few plot points addressing what the novel should cover. The topic for *Tatooine Ghost* was fairly open and broad, Denning says, at least compared to the tightly plotted *The New Jedi Order*: Tell a Han-and-Leia story, set after *Courtship*, that shows Leia coming around to the idea of having children, coming to understand her grandmother through the discovery of her diary, and making her peace with her father and his legacy.

The first outline Denning wrote in response "kind of zeroed in on the classic part of that equation;" after Lucasfilm's initial review, it became clear that he needed to add in more of the elements from the prequel era that make *Tatooine Ghost* a true "bridge novel." Kitster, Anakin's friend from Episode I, got a much bigger role, as did the young Rodian Watto.

And of course, there's Shmi's tale. At first, Denning recalls, he was certain the story must have been told somewhere else; when he realized it hadn't been, he thought, "I've got a lot of cool potential to work with here."

Without spoiling anything, Shmi's story reveals that Owen Lars is more of a sharp operator than Luke might have suspected—and that Watto, despite being a slave owner, can be a soft touch. "That was actually one of the most fun things to write in the book—Watto having that soft spot," Denning says, adding that "I believe that no bad guy wants to be a bad guy; evil or wickedness comes from some twisted desire or need, a twisted, self-centered way of looking at the world."



“IF YOU’VE EVER SPENT ANY TIME IN THE DESERT, YOU KNOW IT’S A LIVING ELEMENT THAT FORCES YOU TO INTERACT WITH IT JUST AS YOU WOULD ANOTHER PERSON.”

—TROY DENNING



HOT TIMES ON TATOOINE

Up for another visit to Luke's homeland? Here are some other books in the Expanded Universe of Star Wars fiction that offer trips to Tatooine.

The Bounty Hunter Wars Trilogy

This series by K. W. Jeter opens with Dengar saving Boba Fett from his near-fatal encounter with the sarlacc. Then there's what appears to be a spy droid's recording of the Imperial raid on the Lars farm—and what the Falleen crime lord Xizor might have had to do with it.

Darksaber

Kevin J. Anderson's novel begins with Luke and Han riding with the Tusken Raiders while cloaked in the Force.

The Ghostling Children

The fifth book of Scholastic's Episode 1 Adventures series written by Dave Wolverton kicks off a four-book series in which Anakin Skywalker tries to rescue a new crop of slaves from Gardulla the Hutt.

Shadows of the Empire

Much of this Steve Perry novel takes place on Coruscant, but it begins and ends on Tatooine: First Leia and Lando try to pick up Fett and the frozen Han Solo's trail in Mos Eisley. Later, Luke builds a new lightsaber in Ben Kenobi's abandoned hut.

Tales from Jabba's Palace

In *Return of the Jedi*, Jabba the Hutt appears surrounded by courtiers in his desert palace on Tatooine. As this collection of short stories reveals, many supposed courtiers wanted nothing more than to bump off the Hutt boss and take his place.

Tales from the Mos Eisley Cantina

This collection of short stories peers into the lives of patrons of the cantina in *A New Hope*, featuring any number of surprising revelations about life on Tatooine and the events of the original Star Wars movie.

In case you're wondering, *Tatooine Ghost* doesn't address Watto's ultimate fate. Denning suspects the tale will be told before too long but confesses he doesn't know any details.

BACK TO TATOOINE

It's a tenet of good fiction that the setting should be a character in its own right, and Denning has certainly followed that advice in *Tatooine Ghost*. "If you're going to set a *Star Wars* book on one planet, you've really got to get to the core and the essence of that planet," he says.

Tatooine and the rhythms of its various ecosystems may come to life more fully in *Tatooine Ghost* than they have in any of the many other stories set there. It's not just that Denning describes the locations and the creatures; he also explores how all those living on Tatooine—from dewbacks to moisture farmers—must adapt their lives to the desert, not the other way around.

"If you've ever spent any time in the desert, you know it's a living element that forces you to interact with it just as you would another person," Denning says, adding that "if you want to be in a desert for any length of time, you've got to accept that it's the desert that's the master and not you any longer."

“I WOULD REALLY LOVE TO DO A BUTT-KICKING YODA BOOK, DEALING WITH YODA AS A WARRIOR.”

—TROY DENNING

MOVING ALONG

What's next for Denning? First, there's the e-book that is a companion to *Tatooine Ghost*, called *A Forest Apart*. Denning calls it "a Chewbacca family story," adding that while it isn't actually part of the tale told in

the novel, it does fit thematically.

Even though Denning is also working on an epic fantasy world of his own, he's enthusiastic about the idea of penning another *Star Wars* title. What's on his wish list? Writing about the Clone Wars, or another story featuring Han and Leia, Luke and Mara, or the

Barabel Jedi he introduced in *Star by Star*. But one character above all strikes his fancy.

"I would really love to do a butt-kicking Yoda book, dealing with Yoda as a warrior," Denning says. "I think that would be just a dynamite, fun, wonderful book to do." ☺

BIGGS DARKLIGHTER

THOUGHT YOU KNEW EVERYTHING ABOUT HIM?

Many *Star Wars* fanatics don't know all that much about Luke Skywalker's life-long friend. After all, Biggs Darklighter would have been a major supporting character of *Star Wars: Episode IV A New Hope* had he not fallen victim to the film editor's knife.

IN THE BEGINNING

Biggs (played by Garrick Hagon) had three major scenes in *A New Hope*: an early sequence on Tatooine that explained his recent graduation from the Imperial academy and his desire to join the Rebellion while illustrating his friendship with Luke; a pre-battle reunion scene on Yavin 4 when Luke and Biggs exchanged excited greetings; and several sequences inside Biggs' X-wing cockpit during the final attack on the Death Star, including the character's fiery demise. Of those, only some of the battle scenes made it into the original version. A truncated version of Luke and Biggs' reunion on Yavin 4 has since been reincorporated into the Special Edition, but Biggs' star-making scene—his conversation with Luke on Tatooine—will most likely remain hidden until the inevitable Episode IV DVD. (You might have seen this deleted footage on LucasArts' 1998 CD-ROM encyclopedia *Behind the Magic*.)

Beyond that? Almost nothing. Despite a few scattered cameos (see sidebar), Biggs Darklighter has remained a mysterious figure in the Expanded Universe. Even Ponda Baba has had more ink expended on him! Granted, the window for Biggs tales is limited by his



death in *A New Hope*, but his childhood bond with Luke Skywalker has always offered a way to explore the trilogy's central hero.

WAIT NO MORE

Star Wars: Empire is delivering the definitive Biggs story in April 2003, courtesy of a comic book dream team. The four-issue "Darklighter" story arc, appearing in *Empire* issues #8–11, is

BY DANIEL WALLACE



written by Paul Chadwick, penciled by Doug Wheatley, and painted by Chris Chuckry.

Chadwick has achieved his place among the industry's top comic-book creators, earning Eisner and Harvey awards as a writer and illustrator. Though Chadwick's career has spanned many genres, everything from superheroes to sci-fi, his signature creation remains *Concrete*. It's an intermittently published title with a fantastical premise—aliens transplant a man's brain into an indestructible body made of rock—treated with utter sincerity and realism. Chadwick always brings a sympathetic humanity to every character, making him an apt choice to tackle the nostalgia-tinged story of Biggs and Luke.

"I guess, in my own mind, I'm repairing an injustice," says Chadwick. "I've always felt sorry for the character for the raw deal [he] got. It was a small but significant part in the script. His scenes were filmed but cut for time." The concept of "Darklighter" has been percolating in Chadwick's head for years, originally pitched to Dark Horse around the time of *The Phantom Menace* but sidelined by editor Randy Stradley until a suitable, classic-era vehicle for the story could be found.



Cover and interior illustrations for *Star Wars: Empire* #8 by Doug Wheatley & Chris Chuckry

ENTER EMPIRE

Fans with long memories might remember an early Chadwick contribution to the *Star Wars* universe—illustrating a trading card in Topps' inaugural *Star Wars* Galaxy series back in 1993. The scene on that card, Luke Skywalker watching the setting double-suns of Tatooine, seems prescient now that Chadwick has returned to the same era and setting. "The twin sunset was a stroke of genius. It gave us that 'ahh' moment, underlining that we're really on another world, even while we appreciate Luke's frustration and yearning for adventure. But those twin suns must've really gotten to me. We use them in *Darklighter* repeatedly to symbolize Biggs and Luke's brotherly relationship. They often echo the spatial relationship of the two young men's heads in the panels."

Though Chadwick is an accomplished illustrator (see his work on February's *Star Wars: Breaking the Ice* Valentine's-themed one-shot written by Judd Winick), on "*Darklighter*" the art duties fall to Doug Wheatley and Chris Chuckry. Wheatley has been nominated for the Harvey award in a career that has included such projects as *Superman: Last Son of Earth* and *Aliens: Apocalypse*. For "*Darklighter*," Chris Chuckry will paint directly over Wheatley's pencils, skipping the traditional inking stage altogether.

"Doug has to do a lot of extra work by making sure that his pencils are really tight and as clean as possible," explains Chuckry. "I then scan these in, adjust the contrast, and clean up any leftover smudges and construction

THE BIGGS BANG

The "*Darklighter*" story arc breaks new ground in its exploration of Biggs' character, but comic-book fans with a yen for more of the mustachioed flyboy should check out the following sources:

Star Wars #1-6 (Marvel Comics)

This retelling of the 1977 movie, adapted by Roy Thomas and illustrated by Howard Chaykin, provides an early look at the Biggs scenes that were cut from the final film. Other sources that covered the lost scenes in some form included *A New Hope's* novelization, children's storybook, and radio drama.

"Crucible," *Star Wars* #17 (Marvel Comics)

Luke Skywalker must save Biggs' life after his friend is wounded by marauding Tusken Raiders in this flashback tale set on the eve of Biggs' enrollment into the Imperial naval academy.

"The Making of Baron Fel," *Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron* #25 (Dark Horse Comics)

What hardships did Baron Soontir Fel endure to become the Empire's top TIE fighter ace? Biggs Darklighter, for one. Biggs has a cameo here as a cadet under Fel's command, whose defection to the Rebel Alliance casts a pall on the baron's blossoming career.

Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron #1/2 (Dark Horse Comics)

This rare issue, originally available only through mail order, features a pre-*A New Hope* adventure of Biggs and his then-Red Squadron mates Wedge Antilles and Jek Porkins. On Commenor, the Reds nab a cargo of astromech droids just in time for the attack on the Death Star. For those without the resources to seek out the original, the story is reprinted in the trade paperback collection *Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron—Requiem for a Rogue*.

"Battleground Tatooine," *X-Wing Rogue Squadron* #9-12 (Dark Horse Comics)

This four-issue story arc is set in the months following *Return of the Jedi*, more than four years after Biggs died under the guns of Darth Vader's TIE fighter. Don't look for Biggs here, but check it out for the glimpse of Biggs' childhood home and the appearances by his surviving family.



lines. It's great working with Doug because his work is so well drawn I can concentrate on the color and painting, and not worry about structure." Chuckry is one of the founders of the computer color studio Digital Chameleon and is currently the regular colorist on *New X-Men*. *Star Wars* fans have seen his work in *Star Wars Tales*, the *Qui-Gon Jinn* one-shot, and the wedding of Luke Skywalker and Mara Jade chronicled in *Union*.

With "*Darklighter*" set to take readers back to the saga's simplicity circa 1977, Paul Chadwick reflects on the longevity of the *Star Wars* phenomenon. "I saw the first *Star Wars* in my early twenties, and while wowed, I was in that phase of life where such un-ironic purity grated a little. I walked out wishing it had more of the tart sass of Richard Lester's *The Three Musketeers*, which was filled with der-

ring-do but also a skepticism about loyalty to any institution or cause. Later I came around. I still like the first film most. But like most of humanity, I've enjoyed them all. The latest films are impossibly gorgeous. I could watch them without sound and enjoy them like a trip to a museum full of great paintings." ☺

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO TANK?

All this talk of Biggs Darklighter has the *Insider* wondering whatever became of Tank, Luke's other childhood friend from Tatooine, who left his desert homeworld and joined the academy. We know the character exists from Luke's disgusted line to Owen, "That's what you said when Biggs and Tank left." But this is one of those rare cases in which the Expanded Universe, normally as comprehensive as the Library of Congress, comes up utterly dry.

JEDI COUNCIL CHAMBER

SORRY, VISITORS MUST STAND

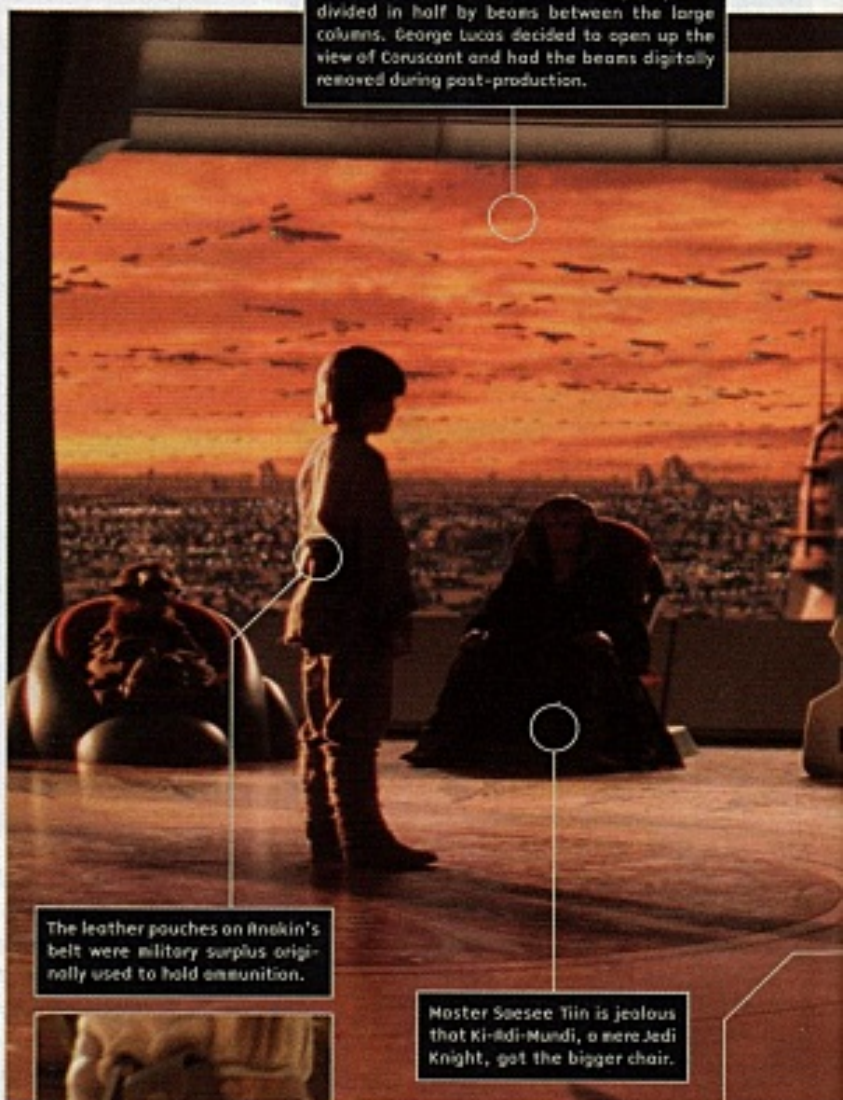
BY CHRISTOPHER TREVAS

In the peak of an outer spire of their great temple, the wisest Jedi gather to contemplate matters of the Force. A ring of chairs evokes Arthurian tales of the Knights of the Round Table. Scenes in this noble setting of the Jedi Council Chamber were filmed during Phase Three of principal photography for *The Phantom Menace*. Phase One consisted of filming on the first twenty-five sets built at Leavesden Studios. As the company moved on for Phase Two, location shooting in Italy and Tunisia, the next group of twenty-five sets were constructed by production designer Gavin Bocquet's team. Phase Three consisted of six more weeks at Leavesden to shoot the remainder of the interior settings.

During the design process, George Lucas described the feel of the Council chamber as a "gentleman's club, where important people sit in big, comfortable chairs and discuss important matters." This was in contrast to the more regal Queen's palace and led to the simple yet bold circular room lined with seating for the twelve members of the Jedi High Council. The set was built on a platform above the studio floor to accommodate puppeteers operating the alien Council members. Of course, one of those puppeteers was Frank Oz, reprising his role as Jedi Master Yoda. Oz, who has moved on to a successful directing career since the original trilogy, was essential to bring Yoda to life once again. While Oz controlled Yoda's head and overall movement, the rest of his team controlled other features. Kathy Smee was under the stage as Yoda's right arm. Off stage, Don Austen manipulated facial features by remote control, and David Greenaway operated Yoda's eyes as he had done previously for *Return of the Jedi*. The original puppet had been made of foam rubber, but for Yoda's return to the big screen, he was given a more youthful complexion with semi-translucent silicone skin. To help balance the added weight of this new type of rubber, the ten servos—which would normally be located within the puppet's head—were relocated to a pack worn on Oz's back. Yaddle, a female member of Yoda's species, had identical control mechanisms. Another puppet was the very tall Jedi Master Yareel Poof, who was built directly into his chair and had an operator inside working his extensive appendages and long neck. Other Jedi around the room had various levels of makeup and prosthetics. Plo Koon consisted of a simple pull-on mask and hands, while some actors had horns, hair, ears, or large cranial additions glued on. Samuel L. Jackson had the simplest transformation, only having to shave his head to become Mace Windu.

Beyond the seated members of the Jedi High Council and surrounding columns, the set was encircled nearly 300 degrees by blue-screen for the expansive cityscape to be added by Industrial Light & Magic. Three different lighting setups were utilized for various times

The windows of the chamber were originally built divided in half by beams between the large columns. George Lucas decided to open up the view of Coruscant and had the beams digitally removed during post-production.



The leather pouches on Anakin's belt were military surplus originally used to hold ammunition.

Master Soesee Tiin is jealous that Ki-Adi-Mundi, a mere Jedi Knight, got the bigger chair.

Actor Silas Carson keeps the peace as Jedi Knight Ki-Adi-Mundi here at the Jedi Temple while siding with the Sith in other scenes as leader of the Trade Federation, Nute Gunray.

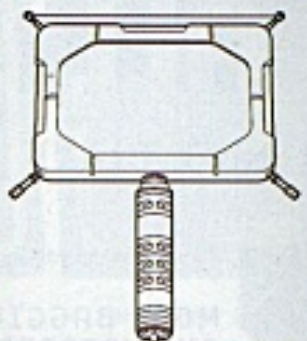


of day seen in the film. A large diffused lighting rig simulated bright daylight, more direct lights with orange gels implied a setting sun, and for nighttime shots only the overhead practical lights built into the set were used.

The Jedi Council Chamber set was not reassembled for *Attack of the Clones*; instead, the filmmakers reused archival footage shot for Episode I. ILM modified it to the proper time of day and replaced masters Yareel Poof and Yaddle with the newest members of the club: the computer-generated Coleman Trebor and another Jedi in extensive makeup, Shaak Ti. 🍌



Mace Windu utilizes a Jedi testing screen to assess Anakin's skills. Set decorator Peter Walpole refers to the design as reminiscent of "an old-fashioned makeup mirror." The custom-made prop was detailed with small found parts, including a circular metal detail on the bottom of the handle that is also present on Adi Gallia's lightsaber.



The Jedi High Council lightsaber props were constructed of cast resin bodies with steel rods down the center. The ends of each of the props were detailed with found metal parts. Ki-Adi-Mundi's lightsaber included an LED light bar and another LED on the side.

Master Plo Koon is frustrated that he is outvoted by all the air breathers every time he requests that the room's oxygen level be reduced.

This lightsaber prop worn by Mace Windu utilized several engine thrust bearings in the stacked design of its emitter. Rubber o-rings along the body and a couple of rivets near the bottom were even actor Samuel L. Jackson's favorite color, purple.



Stuart Freeborn sculpted the original Yoda, which he wanted to have the "eyes of Einstein." Coincidentally, the diminutive Jedi also bore some resemblance to his creator. During production of Episode I, Freeborn was presented with a bust of the younger Yoda by the new creature department headed by his former assistant, Nick Dudman. The inscribed plaque read "For Stuart—the Force will be with you always."

Opko Rancisis sits silent in the Jedi Council Chamber, but actor Jerome Blake is much more vocal in a larger group. In the Galactic Senate he keeps order as Mas Amedda while also portraying two senators and a member of the Neimoidian delegation.



ALL ANSWERS, ALL THE TIME

NO TIME FOR PLEASANTRIES

BY STEVE SANSWEET

It's pouring outside and I'm swimming in questions, so let's dive right in!

MORE BAGGIN' ON THREEPIO

I recently purchased a Kenner C-3PO removable limb figure still in the original Kenner bag. I looked for any reference to it in your Action Figure Archive book and found that figures were sold through catalogs in this form. The leg is stamped "1982" and has extremely minor paint scuffs on protruding parts. I figure this is normal wear for a figure this age. I was wondering if in fact this is a catalog piece and whether it is worth more than the five dollars I paid for it.

GEORG SVEC
Berwyn, IL

I think you paid a fair price for the droid, given that it's not on a card and shows some wear. The major Christmas catalog retailers—Sears, J.C. Penney, and Montgomery Ward—sold bagged Kenner figures in small cardboard cartons. The Kenner employee store in Cincinnati also sold figures in bags, and many of those have come to market. The catalog figures are worth more if they are part of a complete set and in the cardboard box.



UNWRAP THEM, OR NOT?

A couple years back I was at a second-hand toy store in San Francisco, and to my surprise I came across two unopened packages of Star Wars trading cards. Both were in mint condition, with even the bubblegum intact. I purchased them for 75 cents each, which I considered to be an awesome deal. They both have pink wrapping, with a picture of R2-D2 on the front and an X-wing on the back. The cards were made by Topps, and the copyright reads 1977, which leads me to

believe they are original Episode IV trading cards. I've been tempted to open them to see what mysteries lie inside, but the fact they are sealed is what makes them so intriguing! Plus, I also acquired some other Star Wars trading cards that I assume are from the same types of packages. They are sticker cards, all in mint condition, including Darth, Han, one of Han holding his blaster, Luke and Leia, and Artoo and C-3PO's escape pod. I have searched high and low trying to find out if any of these cards, or the unopened packages, may be worth something. Any information on these would be greatly appreciated!

MIKE SAYLOR
Stockton, CA

Your search is at an end. The "wax packs" are from the third of five series of original Star Wars trading cards from Topps. Altogether there are 66 yellow-border cards and 11 stickers in the set. Vintage wax packs—so called because the waxy paper creates its own seal—go for around \$5 each, so you certainly got a bargain. You might want to consider opening the packs so you can savor that 25-year-old slab of gum...



which has likely already ruined the card that it's packed against. Most recent collectors prefer to buy full sets of these old cards, and although others may want to upgrade individual cards, there really isn't a big market for these. A dealer might sell them for \$1 each but would pay only 25 cents or less.

FRAME OF REFERENCE

I have a two-part question regarding posters. A few years ago, my wife bought me a very nice lithograph of C-3PO and R2-D2 looking up at the planets with the Falcon in the background. It is signed by artist Michael David Ward. I was wondering how much it is worth—not that I collect for money. I do it for fun and would never sell any of my collection. It's just fun to know how much the nice pieces are worth. Second, I want to have this and some other original posters framed (Episode I and the IMAX poster). Is there a special way they need to be framed to keep them protected?

WESLEY BEACH
Mountain Home, ID



Michael David Ward did two licensed Star Wars pieces, the one you have ("In a Galaxy Far, Far Away") and another depicting a scene from the end of Return of the Jedi with a squadron of X-wing fighters heading into battle to aid in the destruction of the second Death Star ("Death Star Rising"). Both came in three versions: lithograph, poster, and oversized glossy photographic reproduction mounted on foam core. The latter best displays Ward's technique of painting on both sides of glass, then using electricity to get the "nebula" effects he is known for. These items sell for nearly their original prices, sometimes higher: \$20 for a poster, \$100 for a lithograph, and around \$600 to \$750 for the oversized reproductions.



GLASSLITE (BRAZIL)



KENNER (USA)



MECCANO (FRANCE)

As for framing, you should first consider these facts. The simplest and least expensive way is to dry mount the posters on foam core. This, however, detracts from their collectibility and resale value—which is highest if they are rolled and in mint condition. If you don't want to mount them permanently, you could have the framer put a mat around them to keep them from sagging after they are framed, but that increases cost, weight, and size. You can use archival mattes and tape, and non-glare or even museum-grade glass that protects against sun and interior lighting. Acrylic, which lessens the weight and cost, doesn't provide as much protection as the higher-end glass.

WEIRD . . .

Not long ago I started collecting Star Wars vintage action figures. I have about forty loose figures and four carded figures. I have a carded Bib Fortuna that has a larger card than the others. What could be the reason for this? My other question is about the photos of the figures on the backs of the cards. They almost always show rare variations for figures and sometimes show a figure with a wrong weapon. For example, on a 49-figure card back from The Empire Strikes Back, the AT-AT Commander is shown with a rifle instead of a gun, and Luke Skywalker is shown with brown hair. On a Return of the Jedi 65-figure card back, Luke Skywalker Jedi is shown with a black cloak and blue lightsaber, Bib Fortuna is shown with a red cape, and Luke Skywalker is shown with brown hair. Why did that happen?

EDUARDO NATER
San Juan, PR

Good questions, Eduardo. I really can't answer the first one, though, unless I know what country the figure was originally sold in, and what other carded figures you're comparing it to. The card on my Bib Fortuna sold in the U.S. is exactly the same size as all the rest. But there have been card-size variations such as Meccano in France and Glasslite in Brazil, although neither of those would explain your Bib.

“TODAY'S “VARIATION HUNTERS” AND SHARP-EYED COLLECTORS WERE UNHEARD OF TWENTY YEARS AGO.”

The reason for the strange photos on the backs of many cards is simple. Often, the card backs were prepared many months before the final figures were ready, so uncorrected prototypes were photographed. Sometimes a wrong weapon was placed with a figure, or the toy makers just hadn't finished the final versions. Sometimes these were corrected in time, and sometimes they weren't. Today's “variation hunters” and sharp-eyed collectors were unheard of twenty years ago.



A LITTLE TALL FOR AN EWOK

This mislabeled Star Wars Leia Collection toy is the second I've found with this type of error. The sticker on front reads "Wicket the Ewok" instead of "Han Solo." I also found a Lando Skiff Guard whose sticker reads "Lando General." Are they rare? Are they worth more?

DANTE MCCALL
Eden, NY

HEY, FOUR-EYES!

I was wondering, how rare figures are with extra sets of eyes painted on their heads? When it first came out, I purchased a Princess Leia in Bespin robes. It is in good condition and has an extra set of eyes in her hair. I didn't notice the extra eyes until weeks had passed. Is it worth anything?

ROBERT MACH
Moore, Oklahoma

Enough people keep asking these questions that I guess my answers bear repeating. Besides, who could resist a four-eyed Leia or Han masquerading as an Ewok... or is that an Ewok masquerading as Captain Solo? The wrong sticker

“WORTH MORE? IN MY BOOK, THEY ARE WORTH LESS... BUT FOR EVERY WEIRD ITEM THERE'S A POTENTIAL BUYER LURKING.”

on a package is the easiest error to make in a factory turning out tens of thousands of figures a day. Incorrect paint comes in a close second. Rare? Yes, in the sense that they don't make many mistakes like this. Worth more? In my book, they are worth less... but for every weird item there's a potential buyer lurking.

THAT'S WHY ONLY JEDI HAVE THEM

I was messing around with my Episode II Mace Windu action figure the other day, when his lightsaber blade just fell off, leaving the little nub thing broken off and firmly wedged inside the hilt of the lightsaber. I'm

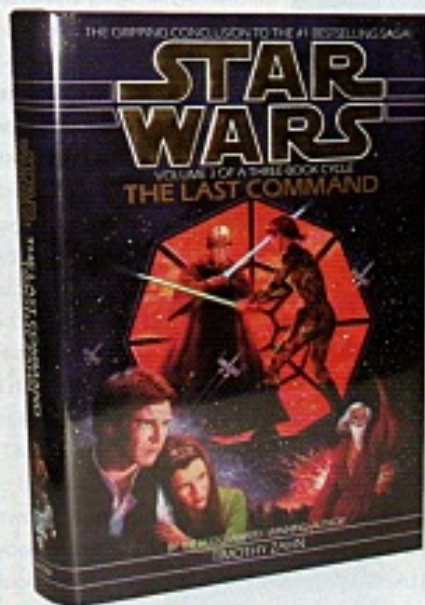
“YOU'RE LUCKY HE DIDN'T SINK THAT LIGHTSABER BLADE INTO YOUR SOFT UNDERBELLY.”



kind of on a budget, so I'd hate to have to buy another figure just because I broke the lightsaber. I know it's a long shot, but is there any way I could find a replacement blade without buying another figure?

DAVID WILSON
Spartanburg, SC

You were "messing around" with (gasp!) Mace? A brave but foolish lad you are. You're lucky he didn't sink that lightsaber blade in your soft underbelly. Kenner used to print a customer service telephone number on all of its toys, and you could



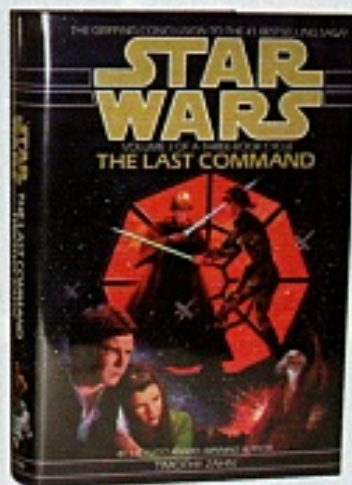
call for replacement parts. I've looked for a similar Hasbro number for you, but the best I can find is a list of frequently asked questions at www.hasbro.com that doesn't include any answers about replacement pieces for action figures, but you can submit questions. Good luck!

SIZE MATTERS NOT

I was hoping you could satisfy my curiosity. A couple of years ago I bought the first two books of the Thrawn trilogy in hardcover at a used bookstore. Although published by Bantam, they are both smaller than any other Star Wars hardcover produced by Bantam that I have (which is quite a few). They also don't have a price label anywhere on the jacket or a barcode, only a 5-digit number on the back corner. I was wondering where these books come from and whether there's any way to find the matching third book to replace the full-sized copy I got online.

LYNDESE CREEK
Gig Harbor, WA

The book you are seeking was published for the Science Fiction Book Club (www.sfbcl.com), a wonderful organization that's been publishing the best science fiction and fantasy hardcover books in slightly smaller, less-expensive versions for decades. I've been a member for years to get their versions of Star Wars books, especially because they also publish exclusive hardcover editions of many of the Star Wars paperback books. But Timothy Zahn's Thrawn trilogy in the SFBC version is out of print, so your best bet is to keep haunting used book stores and eBay.



SCOUTING FOR ANSWERS?

Please send your questions and comments about collectibles to: SCOUTING THE GALAXY, P.O. Box 2898, Petaluma, CA 94953-2898. OR you may email them to scouting@poiz.com, making sure to also put SCOUTING in the subject line and your hometown in the email along with your full name. Letters won't be answered without both. Individual replies aren't possible because of time constraints, but we'll answer the questions of broadest interest in the column. Letters are edited for grammar, sense, and length.

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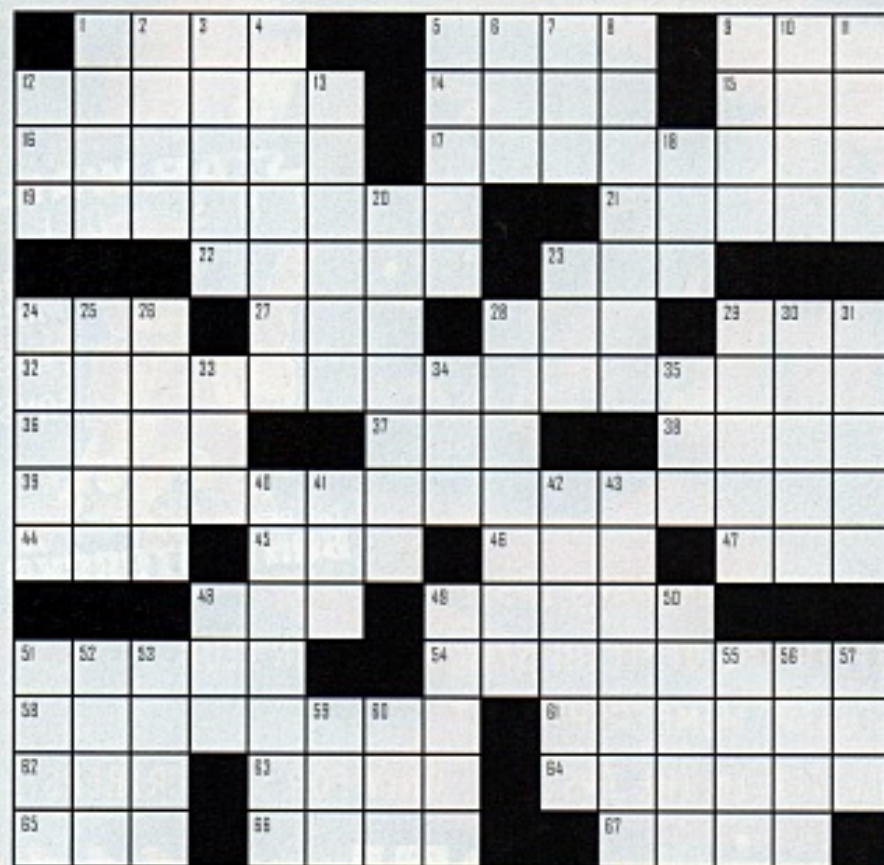
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CONSTANT COLLABORATORS

BY MIKE SELINKER



ACROSS

- 1 The Declaration of a New Republic, e.g.
 5 Accompaniment of meat in a Vortik cocktail
 9 Go out, as tide
 12 Server on 54-Across' poster
 14 Planet of the Aqualish race
 15 "That is the ___ of things" (Yoda)
 16 Like ILM's effects
 17 '77 collaboration between George Lucas and Harrison Ford
 21 Curvatures
 22 Indian instrument
 23 Common feeling in Lucas flicks
 24 Sheep comment
 27 Word in the postal oath
 28 Pags or paga sticks, e.g.
 29 Boiled beverage
 32/33 '84 Lucas/Ford collaboration
 36 Analogous
 37 Golf score
 38 Actor Alan
 44 Sun Devils school Abbr.
 45 Positive word
 46 "These ___ not the droids we're looking for"
 47 Gun lobby: Abbr.
 48 Chicken Run extra
 49 Han Solo novel scribe Daley
 51 High points
 54/55 '73 Lucas/Ford collaboration
 61 9-Down's partner in *Moulu Rouge!*
 62 Prominent feature of Master Ikrit
 63 Spoken
 64 U.S. bonds
 65 Genetic material: Abbr.
 66 Hits, as with a starfighter
 67 Brangus ___ (*Star Wars* Customizable Card Game character)

Answers to this puzzle appear on page 92 of this issue.

DOWN

- 1 Vader can inflict this with his mind
 2 Comic Johnson of *Laugh-In*
 3 Eats licorice
 4 "I'd Like to Get You on a Slow Boat ___"
 5 ___ cannon (big blaster)
 6 Treeboard, in *The Lord of the Rings*
 7 Periodontics group: Abbr.
 8 Did as Owen did to Ben, re giving Luke a lightsaber
 9 He played opposite Liam
 10 Poet
 11 Planet destroyed by R2-D2 in *Dark Empire* comics
 12 Pirate Sir Kyba Ren-___ (droids)
 13 Type of *Star Trek* torpedo
 18 Bawled like Han and Leia
 20 Video-game rapper
 23 Imperial action concerning Jedi
 24 Mazda vehicle
 25 The Mummy symbols
 26 One way to bid someone
 28 Where Luke's graft attaches
 29 Smuggler Kamdo
 30 Where Palpatine and Vader died
 31 Commander of the *Galactica*
 33 Brains, in the *Star Wars* Roleplaying Game: Abbr.
 34 Dark Horse pilot ___ Te Gniav
 35 How Han felt for some time after Serpical
 40 "I Only Have ___ You"
 41 "I need more ___" (Cade Jernard)
 42 Adjust, as toward a target
 43 Feeling emotion that leads to the dark side
 48 Playday founder, for short
 49 Belonging to Leia's father
 50 Excalibur star Williamson
 51 Wicened
 52 Prefix in Ocean Spray beverages
 53 She tried to kill, then married, Luke
 55 Dove house
 56 On the wind-sheltered side
 57 Super ___ game system
 58 Rosemary's Baby author Levin
 60 ___ Lin (Celtic fairy tale hero)



cartoon by Tony Moreley

WANT IT ALL?



For mail or phone orders,
please turn to page 87.

GET IT ALL!

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» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

prequels. The clarity and humor I noticed in his Episode I DVD commentaries and interviews is also evident in his FX exposés. He doesn't get bogged down in jargon, and I have greater appreciation for CGI effects, though I am always relieved to read that models and miniatures are still in abundance. Excellent work, Rob. I look forward to reading your column in every issue!

ANTHONY MEDEL
Montebello, CA

While the praise for Rob's column has been pouring in, we haven't heard much comment on the Animation Directors true "talent": outrageous puns, as exemplified by the title of this month's "Behind the Magic." Sometimes we don't know whether to applaud him or flog him. What's your vote?

RAIDERS OF THE LOST CLONE

I was just watching Episode II on DVD and noticed something I hadn't in my many theatrical viewings. Ben Burtt provided a little sound Easter egg by incorporating the utterances of the Cairo street beggars (whom Indiana Jones pacified with a pocketful of coins in *Raiders*) into

the street walla-walla of Mos Espa just as Padmé and Anakin's rickshaw crosses the screen after their landing on Tatooine. The phrase has been slightly raised in pitch, but it is unmistakable for someone who has watched *Raiders* over 700 times since the age of 13, as I have.

VERNON WILMER
Lawndale, CA

We can't decide whether we're more impressed by your keen ears or your monumental viewing achievement, Vernon. Either way, thanks for the tip.

ONE HAPPY FAN

Hello! This is the first time I have ever written to a magazine, but I felt compelled to do so now. I just wanted to congratulate the entire staff of *Star Wars Insider* for the amazing work you all do. Each time I get the *Insider* in the mail it is an event. I even pop a *Star Wars* soundtrack in my CD player in order to set the proper mood. Your magazine is highly informative, well written, extremely entertaining—and it looks fantastic!

I also wanted to respond to your query about fans having now seen *Attack of the Clones* in all formats. Seeing it digital was incredible. George Lucas is truly a



SHOULDN'T THAT BE RED?

Hey guys! Long time reader, first time writer. Just want to tell you guys that you are doing a great job with the magazine. Thanks, by the way, for adding two more issues a year. That's great!

DANIEL CASTILLO
Haltom City, TX

pioneer and really deserves much more credit than he is given. The IMAX experience was mind-blowing! The sound was just unbelievable, and I did feel my stomach drop a few times during the speeder chase! Seeing Ewan and Hayden on the huge screen wasn't too bad either! The DVD is really well put together, too. All the extras are a real treat to see, especially seeing all the work that went into making Yoda the won-

der that he was for this film. Each format is unique and exciting in its own way and they all total another unforgettable *Star Wars* experience. I am one happy fan! Heck, I even loved the romance!

LISA DULLARD
Palos Heights, IL

Lisa's letter prompts us to emphasize that you don't need to lavish praise on the magazine to see your letter in print—but we're not so



modest that we won't print it. We, too, loved the romance in *Attack of the Clones*. All those meaningful glances between Mace Windu and Yoda really underscored the tragedy of their final separation in Episode II. Give us a tissue.

azine because my daddy and I sit and read it together. I even brought your magazine to show and tell day at my pre-K class. My daddy and I learn a lot from this magazine. Thank you for all your hard work. Can you help me find

ready to route those pesky lost boys right out of Neverland. Captain Hook's got nothing on a Fett with a tank.

SOUND OPINION

I couldn't help but respond to your question regarding *Star Wars* in its many formats over the past few months (issue #64). The only reason I went to see *Attack of the Clones* on film was due to the convenience. The nearest digital theater 'round these parts is a long drive away—long enough to inhibit my seeing the film three times in one week in a convenient manner. Long enough to inhibit my seeing the film on opening day, too—no way I'm going to miss a *Star Wars* movie on opening day.

Having a copy of the movie on DVD is pretty much in the same vein. If a nearby theater was still screening it, I'd probably go see it there . . . but it isn't, so I've no other choice. The extra features are excellent, though, and the video brings back impressions from my digital viewing. I emphasize *impressions*, however. The DVD was superbly transferred and looks incredible—as far as DVDs go—but there's no beating *Attack of the Clones* in a THX-approved theater.

There is no doubt in my mind that the best feature of the IMAX experience was sound. God, I loved that sound. I really loved that sound. I still get chills up my spine

thinking about that Naboo Senatorial Cruiser passing overhead. The image presentation was a little disappointing to me, though. What sort of bugged me was how the film's aspect ratio had to be pared down. I felt like I was watching a glorified TV screen, albeit not too much to ruin the experience. What really bugged me, though, probably had more to do with the individual theater (I went to Navy Pier in Chicago to see the IMAX Experience, by the way). I don't know what it was, but these little black particles kept moving around the screen. They might have been large specks of dust attracted by static from the lens—or something along those lines. I don't really know what it was, but they kept moving around constantly during the entire movie. It was pretty distracting. The picture itself maintained good quality on the gigantic screen, though. That's a plus.

My absolute favorite of all the screenings would have to be the digital projection, though. I'm a little ashamed to admit that I enjoy a flawless picture to a flawless soundtrack (my apologies to Ben Burtt). The sound system was very decent, though. Seeing a digital presentation of a digitally shot and augmented movie has benefits over film, though. Digital characters—clones especially—look less like they were fabricated. In a lot of the Clone War scenes, I felt like I was looking at a video game when I saw the movie on film. Sure, the action was phenomenal (really phenomenal), but that kind of doubt regarding the reality of digital characters really cheapens those action sequences. Not so in that digital theater, though. No, sir. Although the clones still didn't look "real" in a few aspects, it was a vast improvement, not to mention the fact that every other sequence in the movie looked almost perfectly believable.

Seriously, though, is this ques-



PETER PAN VS. JANGO FETT

I am writing to you with my mom's help. I am five years old and have been a member of the *Star Wars* Fan Club for a year, and I love your magazine. I love *Star Wars*. While all my friends at school play Peter Pan, I am always the bounty hunter. My first word was "D2." My daddy bought me my first *Star Wars* toy, and now I have huge playroom that is all *Star Wars* ships, playsets, and action figures. I just got the Acklay for my birthday last week; it was the best gift ever. I love your mag-

out if there will be an AT-TE for sale? I'm saving my quarters for one! Thank you.

LOGAN WEEKS
Albuquerque, NM

Hasbro's Action Fleet offers a spiffy AT-TE for a suggested retail price of only 40 quarters. Once you settle in behind the big gun, you'll be



I WANT TO LEARN THE WAYS OF THE FORCE AND BECOME A JEDI LIKE MY MOTHER

Attached is a picture of my daughter and me with our "Jedi" van. Both my kids' friends think it's cool that we don't have just any old van, but a *Star Wars* van.

ABBY AND MICHELE CANNARIATO
Oconomowoc, WI

tion really necessary? No matter what format you see *Episode II* in, Yoda still kicks butt. That's more than good enough for me.

JOHN CHOUINARD
Wilmette, IL

After receiving a few similar letters from Illinois, we're starting to think there's a hotbed of discerning movie fans touring the Midwest theaters. We hope to read more opinions on the digital/film/DVD/IMAX formats from the rest of the world next issue.

SHOCKED & AMUSED

I am 14 years old, and before I begin, I just want to say that I highly respect you guys and gals at *Star Wars Insider*, but that does not excuse your continual lack of respect for Obi-Wan Kenobi. After Kat, in issue #58, scolded you about this it seemed to help for a few issues, but you still sneak a few comments in every now and then and I want to say stop picking on Obi-Wan Kenobi! Let's not forget that there are other people that don't always tell the truth, like Owen Lars telling Luke that his father was a mere "navi-

gator"; and C-3PO telling Luke in *Episode IV* that he wasn't good at telling stories, but he seems to have the Ewoks captivated by his storytelling abilities in *Episode VI*; and Anakin bending the rules trying to trick Padmé into thinking Jedi were allowed to love. If you guys insist on making fun of Obi-Wan, I insist that you do the same to everyone else. Don't get me wrong, I get a good laugh from some of the comments made, but I am also shocked at the same time. Let's not forget how many people are alive because of Obi-Wan.

VAUGHAN SOLOMON
ALEXANDER
Woodstock, GA

You've got a point about that prevaricating Owen Lars (and that family trait might explain why so many people believed he was Obi-Wan's brother, hm?), but he's not exactly holding himself out as a role model, is he? As for C-3PO, we think good old Goldenrod was merely being modest, not dishonest. Of course, he is programmed for protocol, and most of protocol consists of shameless lies. As for Anakin, you're talking about the guy who becomes Darth Vader, so we think bending the rules is a pretty small infraction compared to what comes later. Still, your insistence that we mock everyone is not unreasonable.

IN SPACE, NO ONE CAN HEAR YOU LIE

First off, let me say, I love you guys! Every day when I get home I scour the mailbox for the *Insider*, regardless how many days it's been since it last arrived. I must say you are in a league of your own with comprehensive *Star Wars* articles like the Jedi lightsaber techniques ("Fight Saber"), and your ongoing vehicle section ("Vehicles of *Episode II*").

But seriously, you guys got to stop raggin' on poor Obi-Wan! One of these days he is going to show up at the office with



HE'S NOT EVEN TRYING

Here is a photo of my license plate to see if you can fit it in your "Artistic License Plates" section. Thank you so much!

CHRIS WILLIAMS, TK-289
Livermore, CA

Y'know, Chris, we're giving you a big pass because we're weak for a man in white plastic armor and your car is color-coordinated, but you really should come up with something else to say in your email if you expect us to print your photo. You weren't even dancing. The way we figure it, you owe us at least a stormtrooper sonnet now.

lightsaber and all, and that won't be pretty. If I do remember, he's a pretty vengeful guy. He even got back at Vader for killing him when he helped Luke blow up the Death Star. And then finding Yoda, that was totally payback.

I would suggest maybe an Obi-Wan appreciation day, or at least an issue devoted to that fine show of skill, intellect, and cunning, Sir Obi-Wan Kenobi. It couldn't hurt could it? And you know what they say: "Vengeance is a dish best served cold." Well, it's very cold in space!

MICHAEL IANNAZZO
Madison Heights, MI

With Garrison Titan and our favorite local incarnation of Darth Vader only a phone call away, we're not too worried about some crazy old wizard showing up at the Palzo offices with a lightsaber. Still, considering the sheer number of friendly warnings we've received lately, maybe we should post a permanent detachment of troopers at the front door.

GIRLS WHO LOVE ACTION

I was reading the fan letters in *Insider* issue #64 and just couldn't help expressing my agreement

with Erin Ellis. We female *Star Wars* fans tend to sidestep the romance and get straight into the battles and duels. It's the action we love. Give me an Obi-Wan vs. Dooku over Anakin kissing Padmé any day.

"Not a girl thing," huh? Tell that to Mara Jade.

ANGELA SCHULER
Porterville, CA

What do you say to Anakin vs. Padmé and Dooku kissing... oh, never mind. We'll leave that sort of speculation to the fan fiction.

GOOD KITTY

I'm just now getting to read issue #64 of the best magazine in print. It took a few days for me to check my mail since I was so distracted by all the great bonus features



Answers from page 88.

CONSTANT COLLABORATORS

STAR WARS

INSIDER

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on the Episode II DVD. Either way, I couldn't help but notice that you printed two letters from fans about the Padmé vs. Nexu fight (one of my favorites as well; although my absolute favorite is Jango Fett vs. Mace Windu, short and sweet) and neither one mentioned the surgical precision of said Nexu. How can one swipe of the Nexu's claws tear off Padmé's sleeve and the front and back of her shirt so smoothly? This seems less like a result of battle and more of a silly excuse to show a little Natalie skin.

Wait a minute. On second thought, ignore the whole complaint. This is a good thing. Thanks a lot, George.

TYLER D. JENNINGS
Salt Lake City, UT

frustration. To compensate (and preserve my sanity), I have spent much of my abundant free time indulging my passion for all things *Star Wars*. I have especially enjoyed your outstanding magazine, which I discovered last December. By the time a new issue arrives, I have practically memorized every word of the previous issue. I was close to that point when issue #64 arrived yesterday.

This morning, like most mornings, I was in a lot of pain when I sat down for breakfast, but I knew that working my way through the latest *Insider* would take my mind off it. I was flipping through the pages to see what I wanted to read first ("Rebel Rumblings" almost always wins)

and ran upstairs to hide under the bed. That "Oh no, not *again!*" What a *dork!*" expression on wise old Yoda's face is absolutely priceless! I don't think I have ever seen a funnier *Star Wars* cartoon!

Thank you for helping me forget my problems for a while. And thank you for all the pleasure, entertainment, and good information I have gotten from *Insider* over the past year. (Yes, I've already renewed.) Keep up the most excellent work!

May the Force continue to be with you,

MARGARET (PEGI-WAN) LUBAHN
Ypsilanti, MI

We've always said that *Star Wars Insider* is better than snake oil, and we hardly ever have to peddle it out of a covered wagon—at least, not since this past summer's convention season.

HE WANTS TO BE IN PICTURES

I've been noticing a lot of my friends' pictures in the *Insider* as of late. Heck, the last issue had three in there! So I figured, why not send you a couple of me? Maybe I'll make it in there one day.

These pictures were taken at the Episode II Charity event held here in the Dallas, TX area. I (Bespin Luke) along with several troopers, an Imperial officer, Vader, and my friend's remote-controlled R2 were the volunteer help/atmosphere before and after the movie was shown. One of the events' organizers was Jason Smith, who can be seen amongst many R2s in issue 63 ("Star News") and the *Bantha Tracks* part of issue 64 on page 6.



He's one of the three friends pictured in that issue.

J.D. JOHNSON
Fort Worth, TX

If, like J.D., you'd like to see your photo appear in *Star Wars Insider*, remember that you can increase your chances considerably by subscribing and becoming a member of the Official Fan Club. Only members can contribute to "Bantha Tracks," which appears on the other side of this very periodical four times a year—but only for subscribers. Fan Club members also seem to smell nice and be much more popular in the *Star Wars* singles scene. We can't prove any of that, of course. We're just saying. ☺



We have nothing to say that won't make us look like male chauvinist Gamorreans. Thanks for saying it for us, Tyler.

READ TWO ISSUES AND CALL US IN THE MORNING

I have been stuck at home ever since I damaged my back nine months ago, and those nine months have included plenty of pain and

when I spotted the cartoon on page 92. I *loved* *The Phantom Menace*, and I have to tell you that I laughed so hard at this cartoon that my poor cats panicked



JEDI MIND TRICK

Telling us what you think of this issue is as easy as distracting a couple of stormtroopers. Set your coordinates for www.paizo.com and fill out the survey. Your answers will help determine the contents of future issues. See the website for more details.

INSIDER INTERVIEW:

C-3PO

A Candid Conversation
with a Protocol Droid about
"the Maker," Serving Humans,
and Dreams of Electric Shaaks

by **Kevin Rubio**
illustrated by **Ken Steacy**

In a galaxy where the number of droids rivals—or surpasses—that of their sentient masters, it's often hard to forget that they are not living beings. From the Core Worlds to the Outer Rim Territories, droids perform every task imaginable. The galaxy could not function without most of them. *Star Wars Insider* sent comic book and TV writer Kevin Rubio to Naboo to interview the one droid that exemplifies perfection in service, loyalty, and companionship. Unfortunately, R2-D2 was unavailable, but the trip wasn't a complete waste. Kevin did have the opportunity to speak with Artoo's less famous counterpart, C-3PO.

The droid that would one day become C-3PO was barely a pile of spare parts by the time he ended up on the planet Tatooine. There, he was built by ten-year-old Anakin Skywalker, and the boy's affinity for all things mechanical imparted the rebuilt protocol droid with a unique personality. Anakin had originally built the fussy, worrisome droid to help his mother with her chores, so he left the incomplete droid with Shmi Skywalker when Master Qui-Gon Jinn freed him to become a Jedi.

Circumstances brought maker and droid back together when the young Jedi Padawan, plagued by nightmare visions, returned to Tatooine in search of his mother. Although Anakin returned too late to rescue Shmi from the savage Tusken Raiders, he did reclaim the only thing he had left on Tatooine: C-3PO.

KR: Thank you once again for agreeing to this interview.

C-3PO: It's my pleasure sir. Although I can hardly fathom why anyone would find me of interest.

KR: Are you being modest or fanning it?

C-3PO: My programming allows for both sir.

KR: Does it also allow for evasiveness?

C-3PO: Perhaps.





KR: But you will be candid during the interview.

C-3PO: As candid as my programming allows.

KR: What is your primary programming?

C-3PO: My primary functions are etiquette and protocol. I serve other life forms, mostly humans.

KR: How do you serve humans?

C-3PO: I'm not an expert, but I believe there are several cookbooks on the subject.

KR: Funny.

C-3PO: Thank you, sir.

KR: Seriously, what do you do?

C-3PO: Primarily, I am an interpreter and am capable of over six million forms of communication thanks to a TranLang III Communicator module coupled with an AA-1 VerboBrain—

KR: Fascinating! Are there really that many different languages?

C-3PO: There are quite a few more, sir, but that is the maximum amount I can store. They've served me well so far.

KR: What language is most difficult?

C-3PO: Why, I would have to say yours. It doesn't follow any of its own rules. "I before E except after C, but not always." You pronounce "like" as "lik," and "bike" as "bik," but "Nike" as "ni-key." Your language has at least nine different meanings for the word "cool" and switches numerals with characters at random, often for their esthetic nature rather than their function. Most annoyingly, it has more meaningless words than any other species.

KR: Could you give me an example?

C-3PO: "Shaba-doo," "rama-lama," "A'ight," "schizzle my nizzle," Frankly, sir, earthlings are a complete mystery to me.

KR: It's sounds like language can reveal a lot about a culture.

C-3PO: Language is a living reflection of a culture, sir. That is why it's all the more important that you communicate correctly with any species. Ineffective communication has been the cause of many wars, not to mention countless failed relationships.

KR: What's it like to be protocol droid thrust into the middle of battle?

C-3PO: War is simply dreadful. I believe that if I'd been given half a chance to present a peaceful solution, then much bloodshed could have been avoided on several occasions. My ability to communicate directions to my counterpart, Artoo-Detoo, has allowed both of us to escape more than one dangerous situation.

KR: Actually, Artoo told my laptop that you did nothing but whine and complain during the Battle of Geonosis.

C-3PO: You'd do well not to believe everything that cross-wired rust bucket tells you.

KR: Can droids not be trusted?

C-3PO: The truth is that you can trust some more than others. Astromechs are more independent by nature. While this allows them to work unsupervised and perform menial tasks, they also tend to throw out suggestions when they are not solicited. They will even occasionally contradict orders if they think they're in the right—quite annoying actually.

KR: You just used the words "nature" and "think."

C-3PO: My apologies, sir. Technically, I should have used the words "program" and "process." My programming allows me to take certain liberties to put beings such as you at ease. As a protocol droid, I'm programmed to act natural, to a certain degree.

KR: Still, is there a nature to droids? Can you think, dream? Do you dream of electric shaaks?

C-3PO: No, sir. I shut down and recharge.

KR: So you're in no way alive.

C-3PO: No, sir. I'm a droid, albeit a droid that's been programmed to act as if I'm alive, if only for the sake of beings I interact with.

KR: Have you ever found yourself acting so alive that you wonder what it would be like to be human?

C-3PO: Are you asking, sir, whether I have a soul and wish independence?

KR: Well it's kind of a delicate issue to press, but yes.

C-3PO: The only proper answer to your question is, "I'm not programmed for that." I have emulators that can replicate any emotion. To desire emancipation is not part of my programming.

KR: Are you programmed to desire anything else?

C-3PO: Oh, yes, sir. I desire to perform any task that may be asked of me and to serve my owners as best as my programming allows.

KR: Anakin Skywalker reassembled you from a collection of older parts. If you were to be taken apart and put back together by a different person, would that new person then be the maker?

C-3PO: That would depend greatly on how the new maker programmed me. If my memory were not wiped, then I suppose I would still think of Master Anakin as the maker.

KR: How is your relationship with Anakin Skywalker?

C-3PO: The maker is a wonderful human being, sir.

KR: Do you find that most humans treat droids as lesser lifeforms?

C-3PO: I find that the majority of beings treat droids as objects. I've learned to pay it no mind sir. My processors are saved for more important things, such as attending to Mistress Padmé's schedule, light housekeeping, and making sure a certain R2 unit stays out of trouble.

KR: What is your relationship with R2-D2 like?

C-3PO: For the most part, sir, I tolerate him out of pity. Quite frankly, I can't imagine how he's managed to function all these years without me.

KR: What if he were to say the same thing about you?

C-3PO: He might, sir, but you'd need me to translate for you. It clearly shows how important it is that I'm around.

KR: Do you feel that you and Artoo compete for your master's approval?

C-3PO: I don't, sir, but I believe Artoo does. I'm very much aware of my value, but because of their ability to speak only Binary, R2 units tend to behave like children—always seeking approval from their parents, or masters in this case.

KR: Yet, for all your fussing, the two of you stick together.

C-3PO: It's my lot in life, sir. You can pick your counterparts, but you can't pick your masters. I came along with Master Anakin, just as Artoo came with Mistress Padmé.

KR: So you're a kind of mixed family?

C-3PO: An excellent characterization, sir. Being considered a member of the family is one of the highest compliments for a protocol droid. It is my job to make everyone feel at home.

KR: Would you characterize yourself as the older brother?

C-3PO: I would prefer older, wiser statesmen, sir.

KR: Are there any words of wisdom that the statesmen would like to pass along to our readers?

C-3PO: Droids and humans are not as different from one another as you might imagine. We all just want to find our place in this galaxy. Whether droid, human, or other, we are all cogs in a machine of life, and we all have to work together to make the one great machine perform to the best of its programming.

KR: Thank you, Threepio.

C-3PO: My pleasure, sir. 🙏

Answers to Your Star Wars Questions

with Pablo Hidalgo, Internet Content Provider for starwars.com

In Episode I, there was a "Yoda-like" alien on the Jedi Council. Where did she go in Episode II? I also remember a creature with a long skinny neck in the Council. Was it a Kaminoan? The membership of the Jedi Council does fluctuate throughout the years, as some members are permanent and others rotate. The ten-year span between Episodes I and II allowed George Lucas to add new faces to the Council, to add visual diversity and suggest the passage of time.

Shaak Ti replaced Yaddle, the "Yoda-like" alien you spotted. Yaddle's fate will be revealed in book six of the Jedi Quest series from Scholastic.

Yarael Poof was the long-necked Jedi. Your mistaking Yarael for a Kaminoan is precisely the reason he was removed in Episode II. Lucas felt that Yarael's superficial resemblance to a Kaminoan might be confusing, so he replaced Poof with the computer-generated Coleman Trebor.



That seat must be cursed.

Yarael, a Quermian alien, died protecting Coruscant from an ancient and powerful relic, the Infant of Saa, as revealed in the *Zam Wesell* one-shot graphic novel from Dark Horse Comics.

In *Return of the Jedi*, on the moon of Endor, Luke asked Leia whether she remembers her "real" mother. She replies that she recalls only a little bit, feelings and such. Is Leia referring to Padmé or to Bail Organa's wife?



The reference is indeed to Padmé, Leia's biological mother. That Leia was adopted was presumably public knowledge in the *Star Wars* galaxy—or at least not a secret. Luke knew about it enough to qualify his question with the word "real." As was written in 1983, the vague memories and feelings were of Luke and Leia's birth mother, though why Luke has no corresponding memories has yet to be revealed. Episode III will undoubtedly shed more light on Leia's enigmatic recollections and hopefully explain how Bail Organa came to adopt the little girl.

Why did Jango agree to be cloned if his troops would end up fighting the Separatists?

Jango is not a political man. He couldn't care less about Republic vs. Separatist debates. Like most bounty hunters, he's driven by a dangerous combination of greed and vengeance. Fett was paid handsomely for his service, and when Tyranus recruited him, he was offered a chance to get back at the Jedi.

When Obi-Wan asks Jango if he knew Sifo-Dyas, the Jedi who supposedly ordered the clone army, Jango says he never heard of him. According to the screenplay, Jango is telling the truth. As Taun



We elaborates to Obi-Wan, "Sifo-Dyas told us to expect [Jango]. And he showed up just when your Jedi Master said he would. We have kept the Jedi's involvement a secret until your arrival, just as your Master requested."

So Fett didn't know the clone army was to be used by the Jedi. As shown in the comic series, *Jango Fett: Open Seasons*, Jango is hired by Tyranus, who promises a chance to even the score with the Jedi for the death of Fett's fellow Mandalorian commandos years earlier.



I thought I read in an official Lucasfilm book that young Boba Fett trained to be a Jedi. Is that true?

Unlikely, given that details of Fett's youth were fairly guarded. Oh, sure, there was that Jaster Mareel thing that appeared in *Tales of the Bounty Hunters*, but Jango's back-story helped put that all into perspective. Some rumors regarding Boba being a Jedi candidate surfaced when it was announced that a young boy would be playing him in Episode II. When Part 9

of a *starwars.com* web-documentary entitled "Bucket Head" had behind-the-scenes shots of Daniel Logan playing around with a lightsaber prop, those rumors only intensified.

Why didn't Qui-Gon disappear in Episode I when he died? All the other Jedi did in the earlier trilogy.

Though you're correct when you say "all the other Jedi," three deaths don't give us a statistical sample big enough to conclude that all Jedi vanish upon death. The prequel trilogy is teaching us that the whole vanishing thing is a learned discipline, and not an automatic response. Of the Jedi that were killed in the Geonosian arena, none vanished. Furthermore, in the novelization of Episode II, Yoda is surprised and confused to hear Qui-Gon's voice return from beyond the grave. Episode III promises to hold more answers about this vanishing phenomenon.

In *Attack of the Clones*, what happened to the crates and boxes next to *Slave I* after Jango and Obi-Wan start fighting? They're there at the beginning of the scene, but as soon as the fighting starts, they disappear.

You're right, the two crates mysteriously vanish. While we can construct a reasonable-sounding in-universe patch (Boba activated the cargo hold's miniature tractor beam while the crates were conveniently off-camera, perhaps), the bottom line is that your keen eyes have spotted what in moviemaking is known as a continuity error.





Are Sebulba, Ark "Bumpy" Roose, and Ratts Tyerell in the diner or the Coruscant chase scene in Episode II? In my Episode II Visual Dictionary, you can clearly see their faces.

Those aren't the Podracers you see in Episode II, though their computer-generated models were used as a basis for a handful of new characters. During the speeder chase, we see Obi-Wan nearly crash into an Aleena and a Dug. That's not Sebulba, but rather a Dug named Seboca. The Aleena is Bogg Tyrell (apparently no relation to Ratts since the surname is spelled differently). She is also seen in the diner, along with two Dugs named Rednax and Manoca, and a Nuknog named Slyther Bushforb. Outside the diner, there's an alien (it uses Podracer Ebe Endocott's body type) named Ony Bobbisia.



The Aleena is Bogg Tyrell (apparently no relation to Ratts since the surname is spelled differently). She is also seen in the diner, along with two Dugs named Rednax and Manoca, and a Nuknog named Slyther Bushforb. Outside the diner, there's an alien (it uses Podracer Ebe Endocott's body type) named Ony Bobbisia.

How did Count Dooku attain the "Count" title in his name?

Dooku's title is by birthright. He is the count of his home world of Serenno. He is also very wealthy by birth, though Jedi eschew such material possessions. Once Dooku left the Jedi Order, though, he resumed his title and wealth.



Always 1, 2, there are, oh, oh, oh!

In *Return of the Jedi*, Boba Fett's antenna seems to switch sides partway through the movie. What's the deal?

Filmmakers worry about screen direction, or continuity from shot to shot. If two characters are having a conversation, and only one appears on screen at a time, it's standard to have one face right, and the other face left, so the audience understands they're interacting. More often than you'd think possible, one is in his trailer while the other is shooting a scene.

Screen direction doesn't only apply to dialogue scenes. If a character is supposed to be reacting to something off-screen or moving in a scene, it's important he's facing the right direction. For all the pre-planning that goes into a movie, invariably it's discovered that you have a perfect shot—except that Boba's facing left when he should be facing right.

One of the oldest tricks in the editor's arsenal is flopping the film frame horizontally. This solves the screen-direction dilemma, but sharp-eyed viewers (and few have sharper eyes than a *Star Wars* fan) often spot this cheat. Especially problematic is that almost

none of the character designs in *Star Wars* are symmetrical. When the image is reversed, there's always a tell-tale clue: Threepio's silver leg or restraining bolt, stormtrooper kneepads, Artoo's panels, the fold in Luke's tunic, or Harrison Ford's scar, for example.

Here's some flopped imagery to watch out for:

- R2-D2 being unloaded from a transport speeder in the Yavin base.
- The comlinks on the Rebel pilot helmets during the Death Star battle.
- The rank badges on the Imperial officers at the end of *The Empire Strikes Back*.
- Lando's holster and rank badge as he says goodbye to Han in *Return of the Jedi*.
- Obi-Wan's Padawan braid on Tatooine as Qui-Gon delivers the hyperdrive generator.

I'm backward!



Where is Mara Jade in *Return of the Jedi*? I've been trying to find her for some time.

No matter how thoroughly you comb through the background extras of Jabba's palace, you won't find the future Mrs. Skywalker. Logically, you can't find a character introduced in 1991 in a 1983 movie. Moreover, you won't find anyone that has been retroactively renamed Mara Jade.

When Dark Horse Comics published *Mara Jade: By the Emperor's Hand*, they established what exactly Mara was wearing in her guise as Arica, the dancing girl. There is no one in the film wearing such an outfit, so we're left to assume that Arica is just off-camera. Decipher crafted a real-life version of the skimpy blue outfit that model Shannon Baksa wore for the *Star Wars* CCG, giving us an idea of what Mara would have looked like in those scenes.

Mara fans that have painstakingly freeze-framed all the palace footage have found a number of hopeful contenders: the redheaded dancing girl that flirts with Boba Fett, for instance. That's Rystall. There's also a woman with short dark hair, red jumpsuit, and white belt. That's Laudica. There's a scantily clad girl with platinum blonde hair, bare midriff, and flirtatious eye on Bib Fortuna. Her name is Jess.

Further propagating the notion that Mara just might be visible in the movie is her inclusion in the National Public Radio dramatization of *Return of the Jedi*. She's chatting with C-3PO in a scene. Many fans mistakenly believe that the *Jedi* radio drama is the same vintage as the previous adaptations of the classic films. It's not—it came out in 1996, several years after Mara's introduction.

QUESTIONS?

Do you have a *Star Wars* trivia question that you can't find the answer to? E-mail it to us at qanda@paloo.com or send it to *Star Wars Insider*, 3245 146th Place SE, Suite 110, Bellevue, WA 98007. Attn: Q&A.



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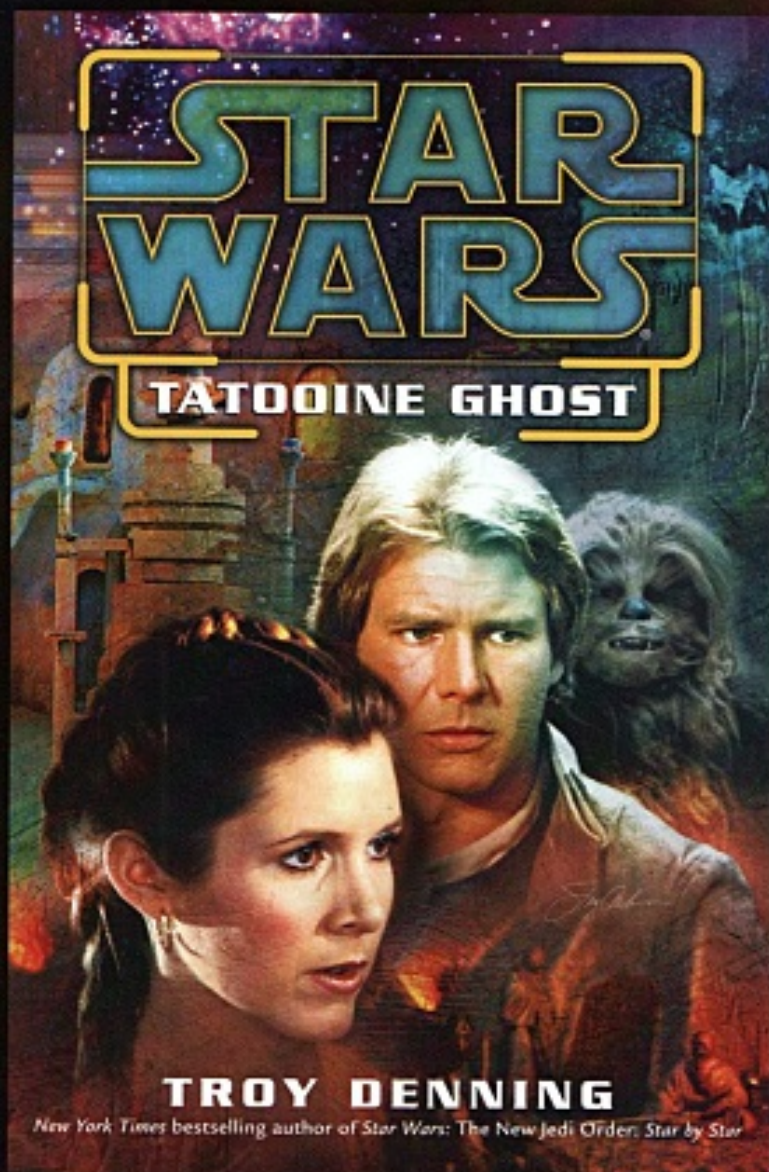
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